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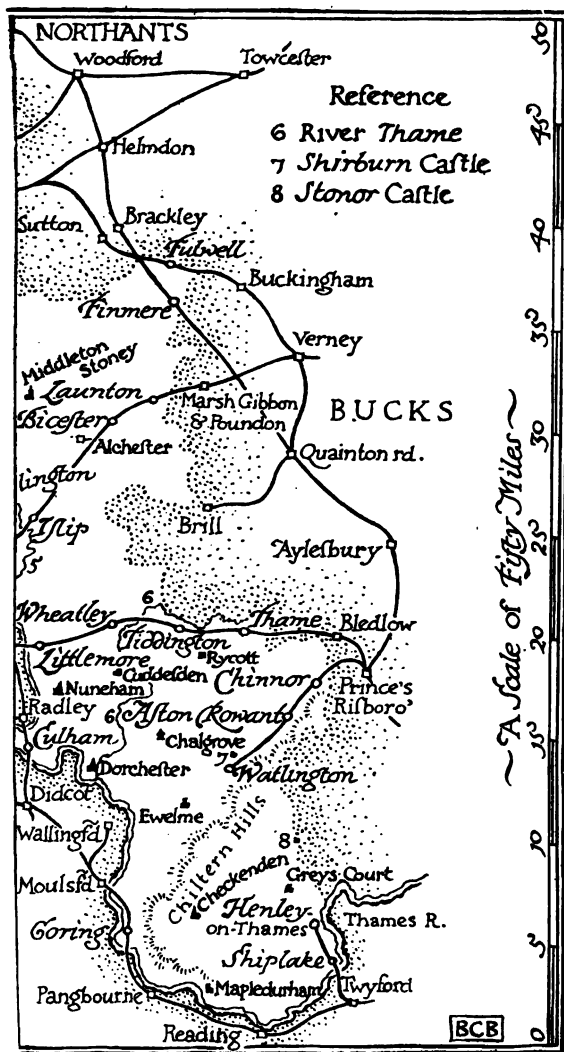
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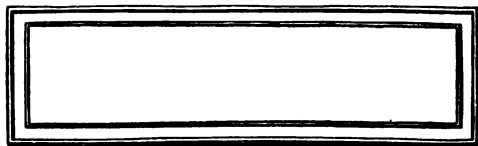
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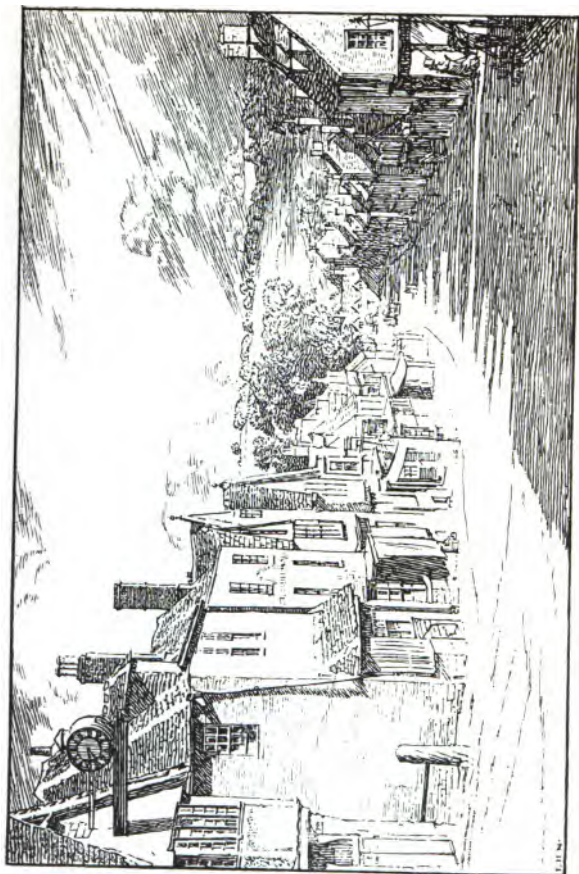
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HIGH STREET, BURFORD

# OXFORDSHIRE

*By*

H. G. BRABANT, M.A.

*Illustrated by*

EDMUND H. NEW

*And from Photographs*

"And what sedged brooks are Thames tributaries"

LONDON

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*First Published in 1906*

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## PREFACE

A DESCRIPTION of Oxfordshire without Oxford may seem at first sight something like the proverbial Hamlet with the part of Hamlet left out. Of course, in any account of the history and topography of the county, Oxford itself must be frequently referred to. But as the city has already formed the subject of a previous volume of this series, I have felt at liberty to omit all description of it, and so to find space for an adequate account of the many charming places which are sometimes rather overshadowed by the transcendent interest of the University City. I hope that I may help to dissipate the notion, not perhaps so common as it once was, that Oxford is a lovely city, but set down in a somewhat dull part of England.

The plan of this little work is identical with that of other volumes of the series. The arrangement of places in alphabetical order, though not ideal, may claim to have justified itself as practically useful. I have tried to arouse interest in

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## PREFACE

various aspects of Oxfordshire scenery. History has encroached much on the available space ; and still larger demands have been made by the remarkable series of churches. I have visited every old church in the county, many, indeed, several times, and, though I have paid abundant deference to authority, the accounts always give my individual impressions. In many cases I have ventured on the fascinating but difficult task of attempting to reconstruct the church historically. In this my work will, doubtless, admit of much correction, but I feel strongly that it is the true standpoint from which a church ought to be described.

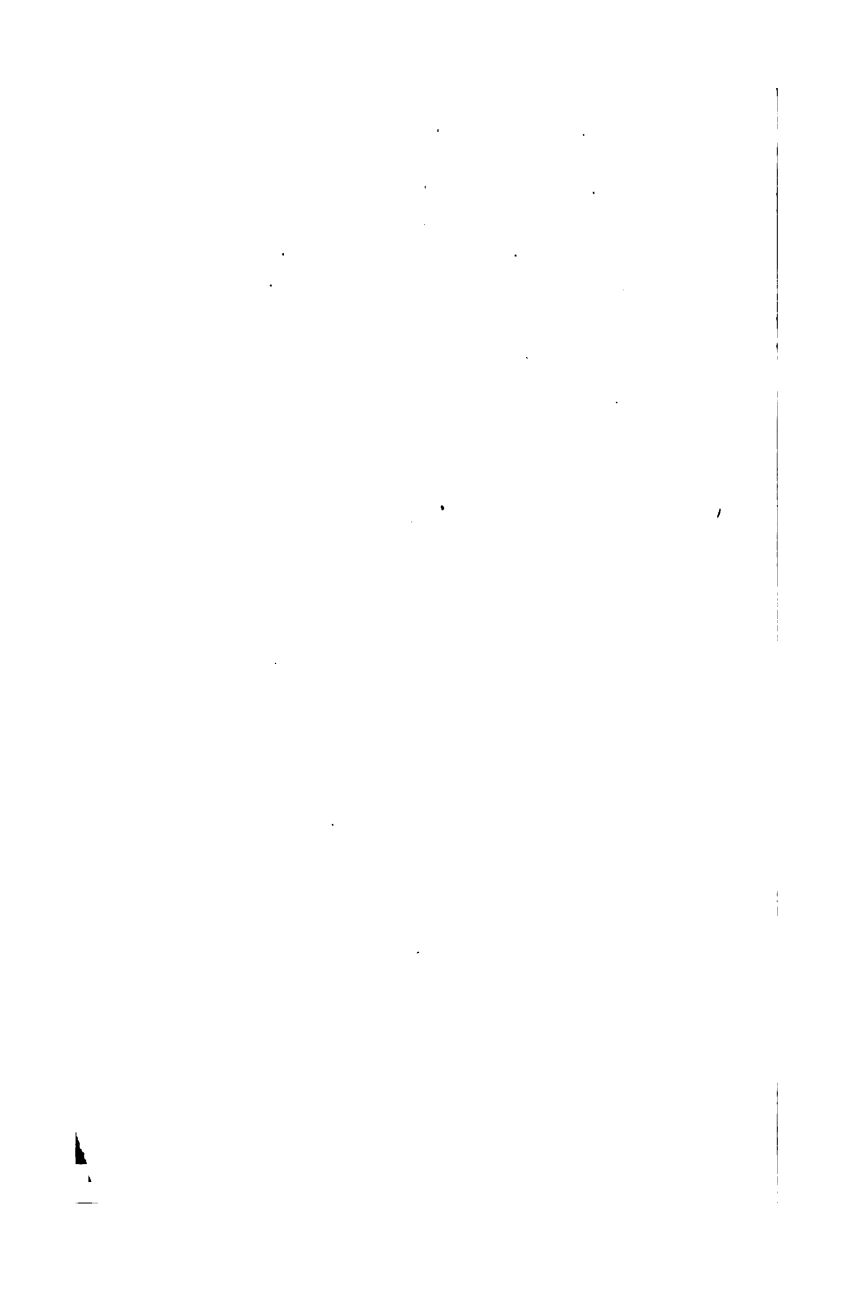
A guide-book writer must always feel that the main labour of amassing facts has been performed for him by others. In the present case I have to acknowledge heavy debts to the local historians and antiquaries, such as Mr. A. Beesley, Rev. J. C. Blomfield, Rev. E. Marshall, Mr. J. C. Parker, Mr. James Parker, Mr. J. Meade Faulkner and Mr. W. J. Monk. Other acknowledgments have been made at intervals in the text. I also have personally to thank Professor Harding Firth for correcting my statements on the Great Civil War ; Dr. F. Haverfield, for placing his unique knowledge of the Roman period at my disposal ; and Dr. A. A. Rambaut and Mr. G. C. Druce for looking over my articles on the Climate and Botany respectively. In fairness I should add my

## PREFACE

thanks to the many owners of historic houses who have kindly allowed me to inspect them, and supplied me with all the information in their power; and, finally, also due acknowledgment to my illustrator, Mr. E. H. New.

22 MUSEUM ROAD, OXFORD

*December, 1905*



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## INTRODUCTION

### I SIZE AND EXTENT

**O**XFORDSHIRE may be called the central county of the southern half of England. It is bounded on the W. by Gloucestershire, on the N.W. by Warwickshire and a small detached piece of Worcestershire, on the N.E. by Northamptonshire, on the E. by Buckinghamshire, and on the S. by Berkshire. Its shape is highly irregular. The main axis of length, almost exactly 50 miles, runs from N.W. by N. to S.E. by S., from near Edge Hill to Sonning on the Thames. The N.W. portion, which stretches N. and W. of Oxford city, comprises the larger part of the county, and has a maximum breadth (about right angles to the maximum length) of 33 miles, stretching from the Thames near Kelmscott to the Great Ouse beyond Finmere. Near Oxford the breadth narrows to a little over 6 miles, but it widens again in the S.E. portion of the county to a maximum of 12 or 13 miles. The W. boundary-line is fairly regular, but not determined by natural features. On the N.W. it runs along the high ridge separating the plateau of N. Oxfordshire from the Warwickshire plain, but turns E. just before reaching Edge Hill, the N. point of that ridge. On the E. the extreme irregularity of the boundary-line seems to have no explanation, either

## OXFORDSHIRE

physical or political. Northampton cuts out a monstrous cantle on the N.E. side, and Buckingham on the E. The whole of the S. side is bounded by the winding stream of the Thames. This gives so irregular a boundary-line that, although Oxford is on the Thames, and consequently close to Berks, yet it is central with regard to Oxfordshire, and almost equidistant from its extreme N.W. and S.E. points. The most N. point is *Three Shire Stone*,  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles N. of Claydon; the most W. point about 2 miles W. of Westwell. The extreme S. and E. points are close together, *i.e.*, the Thames just N. of Reading and just W. of Wargrave.

Oxfordshire is one of the smaller counties, being the thirty-first in size. It contains 480,687 acres, or 751 square miles.

### II PHYSICAL FEATURES AND SCENERY

The scenery of Oxfordshire only attains the highest rank near the Thames on its southern boundary. Perhaps it may be further conceded that the only really first-rate part is between Goring and Henley, where the river cuts a gorge through the Chilterns. Yet, while allowing all this, it is well to add that the real beauty of the county may easily be underrated. The flat region which stretches away N. of Oxford creates the impression that the N. of the county must be flat too. In reality it is a charming, and in many parts a well-wooded, plateau, through which the tributaries of the Thames carve well-defined valleys. The parts immediately E. and S.E. of Oxford are pleasantly diversified by smaller plateaux, and the Chilterns are a grand range of chalk hills, which give a finish to every view. Add to these

## PHYSICAL FEATURES AND SCENERY

natural attractions a roll of fine churches, hardly to be equalled by its neighbour Northamptonshire, a list of ancient mansions such as few counties can show, and an unusually close connection with persons and events famous in history, and it will be acknowledged that the county of Oxfordshire, quite apart from the transcendent interest of Oxford itself, is well deserving of careful and loving study.

A slight knowledge of geology is, as usual, helpful in enabling us to grasp the main physical features. Oxfordshire forms part of the basin of the upper Thames, bounded by the Oolite and Lias tablelands of the Cotswold district in the N.W. and N., in which the Thames itself and its main tributaries rise, and by the great chalk ranges of the Berkshire Downs and the Chilterns on the S. and E. The descending streams cut successively through the intervening strata, which lie roughly in broad bands with a general direction from S.W. to N.E. After descending the gentler S.E. slope of the Oolite strata, the Thames, just before entering Oxfordshire, reaches the flat region of the Oxford Clay, on which it continues, generally in an E. and N.E. direction, for about 30 miles. It then turns decidedly S., and below Oxford cuts through the low irregular ridge of the Coral Rag. Of the remaining strata before the Chalk is reached, the most prominent in this district are the Kimeridge Clay and the Gault, both of which involve flat country. Finally comes the broad belt of the Chalk, through which the Thames carves the deep gorge already mentioned. The district so far referred to includes the E. part of Gloucestershire, and the N. part of Berkshire. Oxfordshire proper contains portions of all the strata mentioned, which may now be described in order.

## OXFORDSHIRE

1. *The Tableland of North Oxfordshire.*—Strictly speaking, there are two tablelands, the Lias Plateau in the extreme N., and the Oolite Plateau S. of it, and separated from it by a narrow valley region. Each of these districts has peculiar characteristics and deserves a short description.

(a) *The Lias Plateau* is formed by the Marlstone or Middle Lias, to the soil of which the presence of oxide of iron has given a deep red tinge. It forms the most N. part of the county, which projects between Northamptonshire and Warwickshire. From the lower ground by the Cherwell near Banbury there is a steepish lift up on to the plateau, after which the upward rise to the N.W. is so gradual that the eye does not perceive it, until the summit level is reached at Edge Hill (about 700 feet), where the ground suddenly descends by a steep escarpment to the Warwickshire plain. To a traveller on the plateau there appears a lack of both trees and villages. In reality there are plenty of both, but they are mostly found on the sides of the clean-cut and steep-sided valleys (usually running S.E.) with which the plateau is trenched, but which are not visible except from close at hand. To the S.W. is a characteristic range of hills, of which the two highest, Epwell and Shenlow Hills, are each 743 feet. They are formed by Upper Lias Strata, which have been left by denudation on the top of the Marlstone, and are capped by Northampton Sands, a formation belonging to the Lower Oolite.

(b) Between the Lias and Oolite Plateaux there are two lateral valleys, apparently caused by the softer intervening strata, through which flow two tributaries to the Cherwell, insignificant in amount, *i.e.*, the Swere and Worton Brooks; yet to these valleys is

## PHYSICAL FEATURES AND SCENERY

due most of the beauty of Northern Oxfordshire. The charming situation of Swerford on the former will be known to few. That of Great Tew on the latter is more familiar, yet of the many who have praised it none apparently have pointed out how lovely the whole valley is ; and the brook which traverses it is given a name on no map.

(c) Farther S. is the great *Oolite Plateau*, several miles broad, and extending right across the county from Westwell and Burford in the W. to Mixbury in the N.E. It is broken up into four parts by the valleys of the Windrush, Evenlode, and Cherwell. The part E. of the Cherwell is the lowest of these, and has less diversified scenery than the others, although it contains several fine parks, *i.e.*, Middleton Stoney, Kirtlington, and Tusmore. The part between the Cherwell and the Evenlode is the highest, and contains the main ridge, which may be considered the backbone of North Oxfordshire. This runs immediately S. of the Tew Valley, from North Aston by Great Tew to Chipping Norton, above which it reaches its maximum elevation (756 ft.). From this ridge the ground slopes gradually S. till it merges with the plain. Two small rivers descending from the ridge, the Glyme and the Dorne, which presently unite and fall into the Evenlode, have much to do with determining the scenery. The part between the Evenlode and the Windrush is narrower and more like a ridge than a plateau. It has lost the beauty it must have had when covered with the royal forest of Wychwood, but retains many attractions on the Evenlode side, where, especially at Cornbury and Wilcote, large portions of the woods remain. W. of the Windrush is another ridge. In parts these Oolite uplands are rather bare and bleak, the woods



## OXFORDSHIRE

which once covered them having disappeared before the plough, as in Wychwood itself. But where the trees are allowed fair play they grow abundantly on the heights, as for instance in the many fine parks, such as Heythrop and Ditchley, or the beech woods of Sarsden.

Separating the Oolite Plateau from the flat country which lies S. of it is a narrow band of a rock called Cornbrash, because of its "brashy" nature, an explanation recalling the "lavendric" properties of lavender. It mostly forms a gradual transition from the plateau to the flats.

2. *The Oxford Clay* forms a broad belt of flat country, which traverses the whole county from W. to E. Its N. line runs approximately by Alvescot, Witney, North Leigh, Handborough, Bladon, Bletchington, Wendlebury, Bicester, and Stratton Audley. It comprises the whole S.W. part of the county lying between the Oolite Plateau and the Thames, and accompanies the river as far as Oxford. But, when the Thames turns S., it diverges to the Cherwell Valley, which it follows for some miles, finally passing by Islip and Otmoor out of the county. To this flat region is due the hasty and uncomplimentary view which many form of Oxfordshire scenery. The country immediately N. of Oxford is certainly tame enough, and little of interest will be found in the Bicester direction, though it may be remembered that this includes the lower course of the Cherwell, which its devotees cannot praise too highly; also the curious marsh-land of Otmoor, over which there are striking views from the high ground to the S. and E., with the villages standing out on outlying patches of the Corn-brash like little islands. But the district which lies N. of the Thames in the W. is capable,

## PHYSICAL FEATURES AND SCENERY

for all its flatness, of exercising a very potent charm. Of this, however, it will be more fitting to speak a little farther on when the course of the Thames is described.

3. *The Coral Rag* is very prominent in North Berkshire, forming a long line of hills, which bound the Thames valley on the S. for miles, and finally broaden out near Oxford into the Wytham and Cumnor Hills. In Oxfordshire this formation is less noticeable, since it crosses at the narrowest point, just S.E. of Oxford itself, where it forms the plateau of which Headington, Beckley, Forest Hill, and Garsington may be said to roughly mark the limits. Above the general level stands up the bold hill of Shotover, S.E. of which is a higher-level plateau stretching to Cuddesdon and Garsington, and consisting of Portland Stone, capped on Shotover itself by sands marked Lower Greensand on the Ordnance Map, but now considered to be an isolated patch of Hastings Sands. The great charm of this table-land lies in the fine views from its edges, *e.g.*, at Elsfield, Stow Wood, Beckley, Stanton St. John, Cuddesdon and Garsington.

4. Apart from this the Upper Oolite Strata affect the scenery but little. In the Cretaceous Series the *Lower Greensand* forms a narrow but beautiful ridge which stretches from Nuneham Park past the Baldons to Chiselhampton, where it disappears to emerge again at Great Haseley. It is marked, as is usual on this formation, by an abundant growth of trees, in particular oak, fir, and beech. S.E. of this is the great belt of the *Gault*, the most characteristic formation in this part of the county, which gives a broad, flat and somewhat featureless plain as the approach to the Chilterns. The *Upper Greensand* forms E. of it a

## OXFORDSHIRE

low range of hills a little in front of the Chilterns, passing Crowmarsh, Benson, Cuxham, South Weston, and Chinnor. At the junction of the Upper Greensand with the Chalk a line of springs bursts forth, which has determined the sites of a row of villages.

5. *The Chilterns* are the W. escarpment of the great Chalk district, where it crosses Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire. At the S. end of the range they are less than 600 feet high, but N. of Watlington they keep a level of over 800 feet for a considerable distance, thus forming the highest ground in the county. The highest point marked in the Ordnance Map is above Shirburn Hill (837 feet). The character of the range varies much in different parts. In the S. the main ridge throws out long arms which descend gradually to the plain, but which are often themselves steep-sided and enclose beautiful deep-set combes. This arrangement persists as far N. as Watlington, after which the main slope is steeper and more regular, though at intervals there are projecting bastions, such as Pyrton Hill, Shirburn Hill, and the fine Beacon Hill. Two miles N. of the latter the range passes out of Oxfordshire, just before it reaches the prominent and beautifully rounded *Thick Thorn Hill*, at the corner where the ridge turns E. for awhile.

A great part of both summit and sides is clothed in glorious beech-woods. In mediæval times these were notorious as the haunt of robbers, so that "stewards of the Chiltern Hundreds" were specially appointed to guard against them. With the disappearance of these robbers the office became a sinecure with a nominal salary, which, according to a familiar legal fiction, is still applied for by members of Parliament desirous of resigning. A fine account of Chiltern scenery is given in Mrs. Humphrey Ward's

## PHYSICAL FEATURES AND SCENERY

*Marcella.* A road runs along the top for most of the way, but the beech-woods interfere with the views. The view over Oxfordshire, when it can be obtained, though extensive, is hardly first-rate, since there are no hills near enough to counteract the general effect of flatness. Far finer are the views looking W. from the S. part of the chain, which overlooks the Thames valley, with the line of the Berkshire downs stretching beyond.

From the summit-ridge the Chalk uplands extend W. for miles, with hills gradually diminishing in height, divided by deep "bottoms". Of these the finest in Oxfordshire is the remarkable hollow called "Bix Bottom," which is deeply trenched between the ridges on which are Nettlebed and Pishill. The boundary of Oxfordshire in this direction, though not that of the Chalk country, is the river Thames, which bends N. between Reading and Henley. All this upland country is pretty and worth exploring, and some features are even striking, such as Nettlebed woods and commons. These sandy commons are formed by patches of Tertiary Strata, left by denudation on the top of the Chalk.

6. *Rivers.*—Oxfordshire is invariably described as "well watered". Besides the Thames, which forms the S. boundary for 80 miles, there are its tributaries the Windrush, the Evenlode (with its affluents the Glyme and the Dorne), the Cherwell (with its affluent the Ray), and the Thame.

The *Thames* is the most striking natural feature in the county. Its remarkably tortuous course falls naturally into three divisions.

(1) Between Lechlade and Oxford it is known as the "Upper River," and flows in an E. and N.E. course over the flat Oxford Clay.

## OXFORDSHIRE

(2) Between Oxford and Goring it flows mainly S. through an undulating country, where flat meadows and low hills alternate.

(3) Between Goring and Henley it cuts a deep gorge through the Chalk.

When it enters the county a little below Lechlade, the "stripling Thames" of Matthew Arnold is already a broad stream, whose apparent width is lessened by the numerous beds of reeds and rushes, the haunt of the moorhen. Its E. course is determined by the low range of Coral Rag to the S., which crosses North Berkshire. When this broadens out into the Cumnor and Wytham Hills, the Thames is deflected northward, and sweeps round them in a semicircular course to Oxford. To the N. of this part of the river the country is flat for miles, yet has a quiet charm, the force of which grows stronger with repeated visits. Its beauty is greatest "when hay-time's here, in June," and every meadow is covered with long waving grass. The elm-trees have mostly been cut down in the fields, but cluster thick about the villages, whose cottages, built of grey stone, and often showing windows with ancient mullions, are disposed irregularly round the grand old churches. None of these villages are on the Thames itself, the utter loneliness of whose course is most striking. It passes two old bridges, Radcot and New Bridge, and a few hamlets. Presently, just below Swinford Bridge, it skirts for a moment the beautiful hanging woods of Eynsham, and then wanders away again into the flats *en route* for Oxford. Below Oxford, though its broadening stream, which has already received three important tributaries, makes every view of it attractive, yet the most beautiful parts are those where a low wooded hill



THE THAMES—PANGBOURNE REACH



## PHYSICAL FEATURES AND SCENERY

rises from one bank. It is very characteristic of the Thames that in such cases the other bank is usually flat meadow-land. The most striking instances are Iffley, with its old church tower and mill ; Nuneham and Clifton Hampden, the two points at which the Lower Greensand hills approach the river ; and the Dorchester clumps, with the range running E. from them. Soon after this the river turns definitely S. and runs for some miles parallel to the Chilterns, with a string of pleasant villages on the left. The Berkshire downs now approach on the right, and at *Goring Gap* the Chalk district is entered, the loveliest part of the Thames. The chalk hills descend into the valley on both sides, and usually a steep wooded bluff rises from one of the banks. The charm of the river is much increased by the weirs, and the numerous eyots or aits, covered with willows, which interrupt the current. The principal beauty on the Oxfordshire side is due to the steep chalk range running from Hart Wood to Caversham, the two fairest spots upon it being Hart Wood itself and Mapledurham. Hart Wood is perhaps the loveliest scene in Oxfordshire, and it can fortunately be well seen from the Great Western Railway. Below Caversham the two most striking parts on the Oxfordshire bank are the chalk bluff of Shiplake, and the views of Henley.

Of the "Thames' tributaries" three flow mainly through the limestone region of the Great Oolite, carving valleys of decided outline, which in some respects partly recall the Limestone dales of Derbyshire. The latter are of course far finer, but the comparison may be suggestive. The valleys are usually too narrow for the roads, which run along the high ground beside them, often allowing good views. The *Windrush* has been fancifully said to

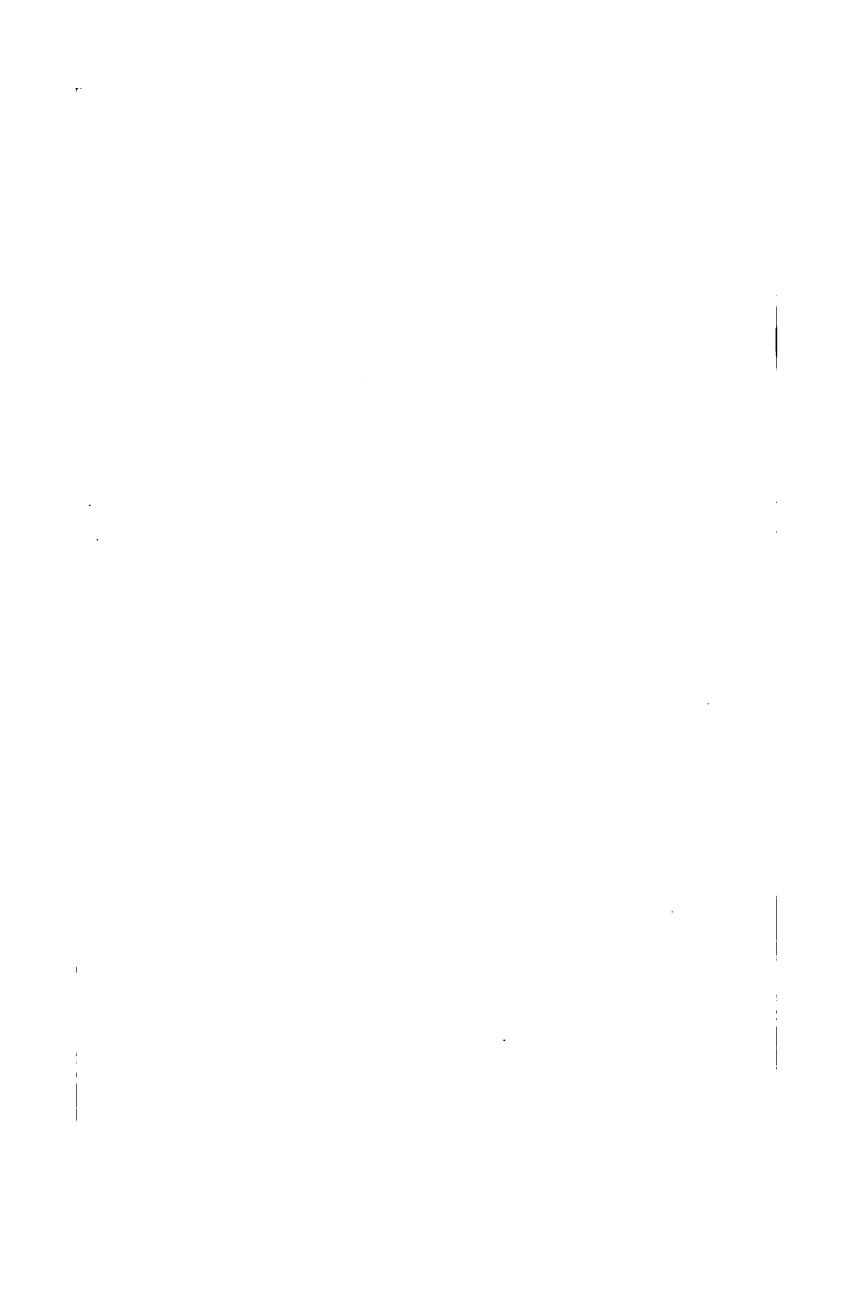


## · OXFORDSHIRE

be so named either because it winds among the rushes or rushes like the wind. The last suggestion is obviously inapplicable to the quiet stream, though it is a little more lively than its sluggish sisters. Its most beautiful parts are at Burford, Asthall, and Minster Lovell. At Witney it leaves the hills, and after a few more miles, reaches the Thames at Newbridge. The *Evenlode* valley is wide and open in the upper part of its course, as far as Charlbury. After this it becomes narrow and tortuous, but is decidedly effective in parts, especially where the woods of Cornbury Park and Wilcote descend into it. Near Blenheim Park the river receives the united waters of the Glyme and the Dorne, which flow through miniature but highly characteristic valleys of much beauty. Kiddington and Glympton on the Glyme will be found charming. The Evenlode falls into the Thames below Eynsham, and near Cassington. The *Cherwell* is the largest of the tributaries, having a course of 30 miles in the county. Its upper course is open till it has passed Banbury, but on reaching the Oolite strata it forms a narrow valley, similar in type to the other streams. The best part of this lies between Somerton and Lower Heyford, but it is attractive as far down as Enslow Bridge. When the river reaches the flat country it receives the Ray, flowing from Otmoor, and for the last five miles of its course becomes a deep slow stream, with banks fringed with willows and poplars, and very charming for boating. It reaches the Thames at Oxford. The *Thame* is chiefly remarkable for the persistent fable which regards it as the source of the name Thames, and dubs the main river Isis until the two streams join. Isis is only a fanciful name used by some writers for the Thames in Oxford waters.



ON THE CHERWELL.



## CLIMATE

The Thames flows mostly through flat meadows. It lies among low hills when passing between Milton and Cuddesdon, and at Chiselhampton Bridge it has some beauty. It reaches the Thames  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile after passing Dorchester.

### III CLIMATE

Since Oxfordshire is central in position, distant from the sea, and of moderate elevation, its climate presents few marked characteristics.

1. *Rainfall*.—Oxfordshire forms part of the central plain of England, which has a moderate rainfall, averaging from 25 to 30 inches yearly. The rain-bearing winds from the W. and S.W. part with most of their moisture on the mountainous region to the W. before reaching the central plain, which is therefore much drier than the W. and S. districts, but yet not so dry as the E. coast, on many portions of which the rainfall is as little as 25 to 20 inches. Oxfordshire lies in the drier part of this central region, the average rainfall for Oxford itself (calculated on a period of ninety years<sup>1</sup>) being 26·10 inches. On the flatter parts of the county the average hardly varies from this by as much as one inch, but the higher tablelands are naturally somewhat more rainy. Speaking generally, the Headington plateau is from 1 to 1½ inches wetter, the Chilterns from 2 to 3 inches, and the higher ground in North Oxfordshire from 1½ to 3½ inches. Thus a station at Kingham has a long record showing an average about 3½ inches more

<sup>1</sup> This is probably the longest continuous rainfall record in the kingdom. All statements about Oxford are derived from the records of the Radcliffe Observatory. The other deductions are based on the figures in *British Rainfall*, now published by Dr. Mill.

## OXFORDSHIRE

than Oxford. The two wettest spots, where the average must be close on 30 inches, are at Lyneham in the N.W. and Highmoor on the Chilterns, but they have only been under observation six years, so that their exact average cannot as yet be ascertained. It appears from the monthly rainfall at Oxford that October and July are the wettest months, and February, March and April decidedly the driest, facts strangely at variance with the popular traditions of "February Fill-dyke" and "spongy April," and also, it may be added, with the notion that the Lent Term at Oxford is usually wet. In fact Oxford is not a wet place, nor is it low-lying, being 200 feet above sea-level. The neighbourhood of two large rivers, however, certainly makes the atmosphere damp.

2. *Temperature.*—The temperature of any place in England is mainly determined by (1) the heat of the sun, which is a matter of latitude and season; (2) its elevation above sea-level (temperature diminishing as a rule about  $1^{\circ}$  for every 270 feet in altitude); and (3) the warm waters and winds from the Atlantic, which affect all England, but are not felt so much in the inland regions. From these considerations it may be readily inferred that Oxfordshire has a climate a good deal warmer than the N. of England, but colder, on an average, than the country lying more S. and also than most of the W. coast and parts adjacent to it. The least elevated districts, which are from 150 feet to 200 feet above sea-level, have an average yearly temperature of between  $49^{\circ}$  and  $50^{\circ}$ . The higher parts of the tableland, of which there are no definite records, may be safely considered  $1^{\circ}$  or  $2^{\circ}$  colder than this. Such peculiarities as the climate has are due to the absence of the moderating influence of the sea. Thus in

## CLIMATE

summer Oxfordshire is hotter than the S. coast district, being close to the region of greatest summer temperature in England, which is about  $64^{\circ}$  and embraces London and the Lower Thames Valley. The winter, on the other hand, is decidedly colder than on the S. coast, indeed than on the whole W. coast of Great Britain as well.<sup>1</sup> Oxford itself is not a very cold place, yet it has been observed that, when there is exceptionally cold weather over the whole of England, Oxford is often one of the places where the temperature is lowest.

3. *Sunshine*.—The amount of sunshine in a given place depends mainly on the power of the sun, which is mostly a question of latitude, but also on the comparative absence of the conditions which form cloud and mist. Thus the sea-coast is usually sunnier than the inland parts, and in Great Britain the wet country to the W. is generally less sunny than the drier regions to the E. Oxford is thus again in a middle position, being sunnier than the N. of England, but much less sunny than the S. and E. coasts. The only actual record in the county is for Oxford itself, which has on an average 1456·6 hours<sup>2</sup> of

<sup>1</sup> These results are based on the tables and maps of Dr. Buchan, who states that the mean annual temperature of Great Britain ranges from about  $46^{\circ}$  on the N. of Scotland to  $52\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$  in the Scilly Isles. The following mean temperatures are Dr. Buchan's, except those for Oxford, which are supplied by the Radcliffe Observatory (and are the means of 77 years' observations):—

	Annual	Jan.	July
Oxford . . . . .	48·86	38·12	61·53
Banbury . . . . .	48·5	36·8	61·2
Whitchurch . . . . .	50·0	37·8	63·4

<sup>2</sup> This the mean of 24 years' observations taken with the Campbell-Stokes recorder at the Radcliffe Observatory. Comparison with other places is difficult, since so many records only date from a few years back.

## OXFORDSHIRE

bright sunshine annually out of the 4435 hours during which the sun is above the horizon. According to the data available at present, this works out at about 200 to 300 hours less than are enjoyed in the sunniest belt of England, comprising most of the S. and part of the E. coasts, but from 100 to 200 hours more than in the more N. inland parts. On the Oxfordshire plateaux the amount of sunshine is probably somewhat higher, owing to the absence of river-fog and mist. The amount of sunshine in May, June, July and August is pretty much the same. In September it begins to fall off.

### IV FLORA AND FAUNA.

Those who are interested in the flora of Oxfordshire should study Mr. G. C. Druce's excellent and comprehensive treatise on the subject. Here it is only possible to indicate its importance and interest very imperfectly by a few extracts from that work. Without attempting to comprehend the flora of the whole county we note five districts of special interest to the botanist.

1. In the N. part *Tadmarton Heath*, where the Lias is capped by the Northampton Sands, is of most importance. Among rare plants found here are *Teesdalia Iberis*, *Filago minima*, *F. apiculata*, *Ulex nanus*, *Ornithopus perpusillus*, *Cuscuta Epithymum*, *Plantago Coronopus*, and *Sagina ciliata*. Here also are the two heaths, *Erica cinerea* and *E. Tetralix*, which, common enough in many localities, are rare in Oxfordshire.

2. On the Oolite Plateau the most interesting region is *Wychwood*, long celebrated for the beauty

## FLORA AND FAUNA

of its flowers. All will remember the Scholar-Gipsy's

heap of flowers

Plucked in shy fields, and distant Wychwood bowers.

Amongst these are the columbine, the lily of the valley, the deadly night-shade, and four orchises (the bird's nest, great and lesser butterfly and the bee). Other rare plants are *Alchemilla vulgaris* (lady's mantle), *Daphne Mezereum*, *Pulsatilla vulgaris*, *Lathræa squamaria* (tooth-wort), *Helleborus viridis*, *H. fætidus*, *Cynoglossum montanum*, *Avena præcox*, *Polypodium Robertianum*, and *Botrychium Lunaria* (moon-wort). Near the forest grow *Salvia pratensis* and *Stachys germanica*, and the very rare *Thlaspi perfoliatum* is found not very far to the S.E.

3. The Coral Rag table-lands E. of Oxford, especially those parts centring in *Stow Wood* and *Shotover*, are described by Mr. Druce as "perhaps the most interesting portion of botanising country in central England". A few of the rarer plants to be found here are *Ranunculus parviflorus*, *Turritis glabra*, *Viola palustris*, *Genista tinctoria*, *Vicia lathyroides*, *Trifolium subterraneum*, *Geum intermedium*, *Sedum Telephium*, *Cœnanthe Lachenalii*, *Onopordon*, *Gnaphalium sylvaticum*, *Lonicera Caprifolium*, *Alsine tenuifolia*, *Hypericum*, *Androsæmum Peplis*, *Chrysosplenium oppositifolium*, *Petroselinum segetum*, *Teucrium Scorodonia*, *Calamintha Nepeta*, *Gagea fascicularis*.

4. The Chalk country of the Chilterns supplies a flora widely different from that of the rest of the county. The following flowers are locally abundant—travellers' joy, white-flowered helleborine, fox-glove, candy-tuft and deadly nightshade; also *Gentiana Amarella*, *Monotropa*, *Linaria repens*, *Helleborus viridis*, *Pyrola minor*, and *Veronica montana*.



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Among rarer plants are the sword-leaved helleborine, *Senecio campestris* (found on Grim's Dyke), *Gentiana germanica*, *Epipactis violacea*, *Gnaphalium dioicum* (found on Watlington Hill), *Polygonatum multiflorum* (found in Shirburn Woods), *Ballota ruderalis*, *Iris fœtidissima*, *Fumaria Vaillantii*, *Daphne Mezereum*, and the oak fern. Of the rarer orchises the soldier, the monkey and the spider are almost extinct, but the dwarf orchis, the little butterfly, the fly and the bee are still to be found.

5. The last region to consider is the *Thames*, with its adjacent meadows and ditches. The beauty of the river-banks depends largely on the following characteristic flowers—the comfrey, with its bell-shaped blossoms, ranging in hue from white to deep purple; the spiked purple loosestrife; the somewhat less common yellow loosestrife, which belongs to a different genus; the hairy willow herb (*Epilobium hirsutum*), which borders the stream in parts with a mass of rich purple colouring; the yellow iris; the arrow-head (*Sagittaria Sagittifolia*), which both in leaves and flowers is one of our prettiest aquatic plants; and the flowering rush (*Butomus umbellatus*), a “gem among water-plants,” occurring in the river at intervals. The yellow water-lily is common, and also the white water-lily, though about Oxford it is most characteristic of the Cherwell. On the river-meadows the two most remarkable flowers are the snakeshead fritillary, the flower of Oxford *par excellence*, and the summer snowflake (*Leucojum æstivum*), found at intervals from Iffley downwards. (It may be added here that the very rare spring snowflake (*Leucojum vernum*) once grew in North Oxfordshire near Hethe, but is now extinct.) Other characteristic water-plants

## FLORA AND FAUNA

are *Hottonia palustris* (water-violet), *Sium latifolium* (water-parsnip), *Acorus Calamus* (sweet-flag), *Hydrocharis Morsus Rææ* (frog-bit), and *Villarsia nymphaeoides* (fringed buckbean), *Cenantha crocata* is very rare on the Thames, and *Teucrium Scordium* may be even extinct on the Oxfordshire side of the river.

*Trees.*—On the Chilterns the beech-woods are the chief characteristic, next to which the holly trees and juniper bushes are noticeable. On the Oxford Clay the elm is the dominant tree, except by the rivers, where willows and poplars are found. Oaks are scattered throughout the county, but they are hardly characteristic anywhere, except at Nuneham. In North Oxfordshire elms grow on the slopes of the valleys, the high ground above being chiefly occupied by single ash trees and beech plantations.

The *Birds of Oxfordshire* should be studied in Mr. O. V. Aplin's book, from which a few selected facts are appended. Another work of great interest is Mr. Warde Fowler's *A Year with the Birds*, in which he describes the bird-life of two districts in the county, *i.e.*, Oxford and its neighbourhood, and the surroundings of Kingham on the upper Evenlode. His main object is to give clear accounts of the commoner species, which abound everywhere, owing to plentiful supplies of food, water and wood for shelter. Among the more interesting birds he describes are the grey Wag-tail, which, being fond of running water, haunts the weirs in winter time; the Reed Warbler, which is rarer than some other species of warblers, since the reeds, to which it may attach its swaying nest (often selected by the Cuckoo for the attention of an intrusive egg), are not to be found everywhere, and the Lesser Red-pole, a winter visitor, who has occasionally been

## OXFORDSHIRE

tempted by the Oxford parks to stop for the summer also. Among rarer birds Mr. Fowler mentions the Black Redstart, once seen by him at Kingham, the very scarce Marsh Warbler, and the Grasshopper Warbler, called the Reel-bird from its curious note.

The county has the unusually large number of 242 species. The predominant features are characteristic of the S. and E. parts of England, rather than the N. and W. Thus birds such as the Hobby, the Nightingale and the Lesser Spotted Woodpecker, "are perhaps as abundant as anywhere else in the kingdom". Of the rarer species, there may be mentioned, among residents, the long-eared Owl and the Great Spotted Woodpecker, and among migrants, two species of shrike and the Wry-neck. On the Chilterns the Woodlark, the Cirl Bunting and the Stone Curlew are to be found. But the number of species is largely made up of occasional visitors. The rarest of these are the Alpine Chough, which visited Broughton Park in 1881, its only appearance in Great Britain; the Andalusian Hemipode, only twice found in Great Britain; the bearded Tit, which formerly bred in the county, but now is a very rare stranger; the Honey Buzzard, the Golden Oriole, and the Hoopoe, of which the last two would probably breed, did not their conspicuous beauty always mark them out as the prey of the gunner.

Owing to the central position of the county it is visited by many birds of passage, who stop merely a few days or weeks in spring and autumn. Such are the Green Sandpiper, the Pied Flycatcher, the Ring-Ousel, the Wheatear, and the Dotterel, which visits annually a hill near Crowmarsh. But perhaps the most striking feature in Oxfordshire bird-life is

## DISTRIBUTION OF POPULATION

the large number of sea-birds among its casual visitors. Flights of birds such as gulls are sometimes seen passing overhead and are surmised to be taking a short cut from the Wash to the Severn. Very rarely occur storm-driven wanderers, such as the Fulmar, the Storm Petrel and the Manx Shearwater. A commoner case is of birds who have come up the Thames in bad weather in search of food and shelter, such as many species of Gulls and Terns. These birds are often attracted by the marshy flats of Port Meadow, above Oxford, where aquatic birds of all kinds, salt and fresh-water alike, have been observed, among them the Grey Phalarope and other rare species. Clattercote reservoir, in the N. of the county, is a paradise for water-birds, and is well described by Mr. Aplin. Water-fowl are also still found on Otmoor, though not in such large numbers as when it was undrained.

### V DISTRIBUTION OF POPULATION

Oxfordshire being an entirely agricultural county is but sparsely populated. Its total population in 1901 was 186,460, about three-quarters of the population of Bristol. The only important centre of population is Oxford, which has 49,326 inhabitants. Next, after a long interval, comes Banbury, with 12,968. Besides these two there are no towns of real importance, unless indeed Henley (5,484) be so considered. There are only seven other places which have more than 2,000 inhabitants, and of these the largest, Caversham (6,580), is nothing but a suburb of Reading, while two others, Headington (3,422) and Cowley (2,091), are practically suburbs of Oxford. The others are Chipping Nor-

## OXFORDSHIRE

ton (4,130), Witney (3,574), Bicester (3,023), and Thame (2,911). Of the smaller towns and villages there are only thirteen which have between 1,000 and 2,000 inhabitants. The villages are distributed over the county pretty impartially, except that there are few in the waterless region of the Chilterns, while at the foot of the range, where the springs gush from the chalk, there is a long string of them. The N. uplands contain plenty of villages, which however, with some prominent exceptions, such as Chipping Norton, Deddington, Fritwell, etc., are not placed on the top of the plateau, but on the slopes which fall to the valleys, or in the valleys themselves.

In 1801 the population of the county was 111,977. In 1901 the population on the same area<sup>1</sup> was 181,120; thus giving a total increase for the last century of 69,143. Oxford itself however has increased to the extent of 37,057, and if we take into account the increase in the nine other largest towns (those which now have over 2,000 inhabitants) the whole increase is accounted for, except about 10,000. This practically means that the agricultural population of the county has hardly increased at all during the century. At present it is very decidedly on the decrease. This appears from a comparison of the census of 1901 with that of 1891. The population of the county (on its present administrative area) has decreased in the decade by about 3,000. This represents roughly an increase of 5,000 in the towns (of which Oxford itself accounts for 70 per cent.), and a decrease of 8,000 in the country. The only districts which are increasing in

<sup>1</sup>The boundaries of the county have been somewhat changed in the last decade.

## COMMUNICATIONS

population are : (1) Oxford and its environs, such as Cowley and Headington ; (2) the riverside places between Goring and Henley, the attractions of which are being more recognised. Goring itself, however, has somewhat decreased. Of the smaller places Hook Norton, which has developed quarries, is the only one which is really increasing. Banbury has risen only 200 in the decade, and all the smaller market-towns, such as Chipping Norton, Witney, Bicester and Thame, are decreasing. Some towns, such as Burford and Woodstock, have actually a smaller population than they had a century ago. All the smaller villages show a decrease, often a considerable one. The causes are the too familiar ones, agricultural depression, introduction of machinery, and the attraction of the towns. As a recent observer (Mr. W. H. Hutton) has said : "You see old men, a few middle-aged men, many boys, but hardly a single young man". All are gone to London and Birmingham.

### VI COMMUNICATIONS

1. *Roads*.—A great improvement took place in the roads about the middle of the eighteenth century. Up till then they were repaired with local stone "in pieces as large as a man's head and calculated for dislocation rather than exercise" (Arthur Young), and riders often found it better to neglect them altogether, and make the best of their way across the fields. In the seventeenth century the coach from London to Oxford (about 56 miles) took two days. In 1669 "flying coaches" were stated to do the journey in one day, "if God permit," as the notices ran. The London coaches were, up to quite recent

## OXFORDSHIRE

times, occasionally "held up" by highwaymen, when crossing the Chilterns. A more visionary danger was the attack of "Black Stockings" (see Asthall) on the Witney and Burford coach. Henley was of repute in the palmy days of coaching, and its riverside hotels were then coaching inns. Enstone was also a great centre with six large inns, and a band playing every night.

The Oxfordshire roads have doubtless improved, but they are not above criticism. As a rule the roads near Oxford, *i.e.*, within a radius of 5 miles, are bad. Beyond this distance they are mostly good. Thus the two great trunk roads, which lead N. from Oxford to Woodstock and Banbury, begin to be good at Begbroke and Kidlington respectively, and continue so. Nearly all the important roads in North Oxfordshire are very good, but the cross-roads, which are repaired with local oolite stone, are rough, and terribly greasy in wet weather. The Witney and Burford road is also good in the main, but the flat country S. of it has nothing but indifferent roads. In the S.E. part the two main London roads, by High Wycombe and Henley, are pretty good, though somewhat loose on the slopes of the Chilterns. The central road by Watlington is inferior. The cross-roads are mostly fair riding, and one of them, between Abingdon and Dorchester, is excellent.

2. Nearly all the *railways* may be considered as radiating from Oxford itself. Most of them belong to the G.W.R. They are in order : (1) the main line N. which runs up the Cherwell Valley to Banbury and onward ; (2) the Worcester line, which runs up the Evenlode Valley to Charlbury and Chip-ping Norton Junction ; (3) the Witney and Fairford branch, which traverses the flat country to the W. ;

## INDUSTRIES

(4) the main London line, which keeps the Thames Valley, but has only two stations in the county, *i.e.*, Culham and Goring, and a branch line to a third, Henley; (5) the branch to Thame, from which another branch diverges S. to Watlington; (6) the L. & N.W.R. line to Bicester and Bletchley. There is also a branch line in the N. which runs by Adderbury, Bloxham, and Chipping Norton. The Great Central Railway crosses a corner of the county and has one station in it at Finmere.

3. The only *canal* runs up the Cherwell Valley from Oxford to Birmingham. It was opened in 1790, and is mainly used for the transport of coal. The whole course of the Thames in the county is navigable by barges.

## VII INDUSTRIES

1. *Agriculture* is the staple industry. The lowlands, especially on the Oxford Clay, which has a cold, stiff soil and is much liable to be inundated by the rivers, are almost entirely given up to pasturage and hay. The uplands, especially the N. plateaux, form an important corn-raising district. Formerly they were famous rather for rearing sheep, but this was changed in the middle of the last century by the enclosure of common land, and the breaking up of forests, such as Wychwood, since most of the land so enclosed was taken for cultivation. It is true that there are many fine sheep still to be seen, which are of the characteristic Cotswold variety, a slow and dull-looking animal, but large and heavy, and with a fine fleece, just the antipodes of the small, wiry mountain sheep of Wales and Cumberland. But the principal product is corn. The most fertile part is



## OXFORDSHIRE

the strip of corn-brash which runs across the county between the Great Oolite and the Oxford Clay. The Chiltern uplands produce good, but somewhat late, crops. The large increase in arable land led at first to an increased employment of agricultural labourers, but now machinery is in general use, and far fewer are required.

2. *Manufactures* are few. Blankets are made at Witney—the only industry of importance; tweeds at Chipping Norton, and gloves at Woodstock, though the glove-trade has decayed from its mediæval splendour. Banbury makes agricultural implements, but very little, if any, of its manufacture of plush survives. Other vanished industries are the malt-trade of Henley, and the making of saddles at Burford, hemp for linen at Fritwell, and wrought-iron at Woodstock. There are two important paper-mills on the Thames at Wolvercote and Sandford.

3. *Quarrying* for building stone is carried on at Headington, Stonesfield and Hook Norton. The St. Kitt's Quarries at Burford, used by Wren for Westminster Abbey, are now disused. The remaining mineral wealth of the county is of little importance, consisting of flints, clay, limestone, gravel and sand.

## VIII HISTORY

Few counties can show so long and important a connection with English History as Oxfordshire, even when the history of Oxford itself is eliminated. The main events are here strung together in a brief connected narrative.

It is not definitely known what tribe or tribes dwelt in Oxfordshire at the time of the Roman Conquest, and it may have been but sparsely in-

## HISTORY

habited. To the W. were the Dobuni, to the E. the Catuvellauni, and to the S. the Atrebates, but their exact boundaries are extremely uncertain. The county lies within the district subdued in the first three or four years of the conquest, but no details are known.<sup>1</sup> Two Roman towns or villages existed at Dorchester and Alchester.

After the Saxon occupation, a long and varied duel took place for two centuries between the kingdoms of Wessex and Mercia, each trying to push the other back from the frontier line of the Thames. The most notable events are the battle of Burford in 752, when Wessex triumphed; and the battle of Benson in 777, in which Offa regained the superiority for Mercia, of which it was finally deprived by Ecgbert. Alfred held a witan at Shifford on the Thames, Aethelred the Redeless had three Oxfordshire palaces—at Woodstock, Headington, and Islip, at the last of which his son, Edward the Confessor, was born. During the Saxon period Christianity was introduced by Birinus, and Dorchester was twice the see of a bishop, first of Wessex, then of Mercia. Synods were held at Burford in 685 and at Kirtlington in 977.

At the Norman Conquest the baron Robert D'Oilly became the most powerful man in the county. Partly by gift from the Conqueror, partly by his marriage with the daughter of the Saxon nobleman Wigod, he had acquired about fifty of the most important manors, some of which he gave to his friend Roger D'Ivery. Oxford Castle was

<sup>1</sup> The theory that Aulus Plautius' campaign of A.D. 43 was partly in Oxfordshire rests on an identification, now discredited, of the Dobuni of Gloucestershire with the Boduni who submitted to Aulus Plautius, and are now considered to have been a Kentish tribe.

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built by him, but most of the castles in the county were "adulterine," *i.e.*, built without authority during the Civil War in Stephen's reign, and afterwards completely razed. The Norman kings were early attracted to Oxfordshire by the hunting, for which the extensive forests afforded opportunity. At this time probably all the uplands were continuous woodland. Henry I. built palaces at Oxford and Woodstock, and later a royal hunting lodge was built at Langley, near Wychwood, possibly by King John. Woodstock has intimate associations with the life of nearly all our English Kings, from Henry I. down to Charles I., of which the story of Henry II. and fair Rosamond is the most famous episode. Another royal resident was Richard King of the Romans, who had a palace at Beckley, and is the most striking figure in Oxfordshire in the thirteenth century. With the troubles of Edward II.'s reign the county is much connected. Piers Gaveston was imprisoned by the Earl of Pembroke at Deddington, where he was seized and carried off to his doom on Blacklow Hill by the implacable Earl of Warwick. A plot against the Despensers was hatched by the barons at Shirburn Castle, and later Queen Isabella stopped at Islip, when pursuing her unfortunate husband. In the troublous times of Richard II. there was a battle at Radcot Bridge in 1387, where the Duke of Ireland was defeated by the army of the Lords Appellant, led by Bolingbroke. With the actors in the Wars of the Roses Oxfordshire is only concerned incidentally. The unhappy Duke of Suffolk and the King Maker appear at Ewelme and Burford respectively as "pious founders," the latter vicariously with another man's money. Edward IV. is said to have met Elizabeth, his future Queen, in

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the glades of Wychwood. Lord Lovell, Richard III.'s minister, lived at Minster Lovell, where he may have been concealed after his mysterious disappearance in the battle of Stoke, 1487.

At the Dissolution of the Monasteries the largest shares of the plunder fell to Sir Thomas Pope, afterwards founder of Trinity College, Oxford, and to Lord Williams of Thame, who presided as Sheriff at the burning of the Bishops in Oxford under Queen Mary, and was given the custody of the Princess Elizabeth at Rycote, just after her more rigorous imprisonment at Woodstock. In Elizabeth's own reign, besides many Royal progresses and visits, there may be mentioned the Earl of Leicester's death at Cornbury, and the fate of the seminary priest, Edmund Campion, who lay hid for some time at Stonor Castle before he was captured, not far from Abingdon. Catesby, of Gunpowder Plot fame, was once owner of Chastleton, and the Duke of Somerset, when accused of Sir Thomas Overbury's murder, was confined at Grey's Court. Sir George Croke, the "stalwart" judge, who declared ship-money illegal, lived at Studley Priory and was buried at Waterstock.

*The Great Civil War.*—At this point the history of the county becomes of supreme importance. Oxford itself was the centre of the Royalist resistance, and the important battles of Edgehill, Chalgrove, and Cropredy were in its immediate vicinity, together with countless skirmishes and sieges. Moreover many of the principal actors were closely connected with Oxfordshire, above all, the two great martyrs of the war, Falkland, whose homes were at Great Tew and Burford, and Hampden, who married an Oxfordshire bride at Pyrton, and died at Thame of a

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wound received at Chalgrove Field. Of the generals on either side there is much to say, and also of at least two statesmen, Lord Saye and Sele ("Old Subtilty"), and Speaker Lenthall, who was born at Henley and lived and died at Burford.

At the beginning of the War North Oxfordshire was strongly Parliamentary. This was due to the Puritan tastes of Banbury, and the influence of Lord Saye and Sele, Lord Lieutenant of the county, at whose house, Broughton Castle, the Puritan leaders met secretly to concert resistance to Charles. But after the battle of Edgehill (1642) Banbury surrendered at the first summons, and received a Royalist garrison into the castle, while Broughton Castle also surrendered in the absence of its lord. Before the end of the year Oxford became the Royalist headquarters. It was defended by a circle of fortified posts, of which those in Oxfordshire were Mapledurham House, Bletchington House, Woodstock Palace and Gaunt House (near Northmoor). In April, 1643, Essex advanced to the attack from the E. He first besieged Reading, and after repulsing an attempt to relieve it in a smart skirmish on Caversham Bridge, he forced it to surrender, at the same time capturing Mapledurham, and then advanced into Oxfordshire and occupied Thame. He moved so slowly and with such an extended front, that Rupert saw his opportunity for the daring raid which issued in the fight at Chalgrove Field and the death of Hampden. Soon after Essex retreated from Thame. In 1644 Essex and Waller made a combined attempt to crush Charles at Oxford. Essex advanced by the E., but was stopped by the Cherwell (at Gosford and Enslow), the passage of which, after three days'

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severe fighting, he was unable to force. Meanwhile Waller had led his army to the W. of Oxford (S. of the Thames), and on 2nd June forced the passage of that river at Newbridge and advanced to Eynsham. On hearing this, Charles made a skilful retreat from Oxford in the night of 3rd June, marching by way of Wolvercote, Yarnton, the bridge over the Evenlode near Handborough, and then by Witney to Burford, and finally to Worcester. Essex now made the mistake of leaving Waller alone, and marched S. to the relief of Lyme. Charles accordingly marched back again, and, after rejoining the rest of his forces at Witney, fell in with Waller near Banbury, and on 29th June fought an indecisive action with him at Cropredy Bridge, soon after which Waller's army melted away. This success was neutralised by the defeat at Marston Moor, only three days later. In April, 1645, Cromwell made a cavalry raid round Oxford, during which he defeated some Royalists at Islip, and the next day induced Bletchington House to surrender (for which its commander, Col. Windebank, was court-martialled and shot). Then he proceeded by Witney and Bampton, where he had a successful skirmish, and back again S. of the Thames. In May, 1645, Cromwell and Fairfax met at Marston to concert the siege of Oxford. Gaunt House was captured a week later, but the siege of Oxford was raised for the time by Charles. After the defeat of Naseby the end of the war was in view. In 1646 Woodstock fell on 26th April, Banbury on 8th May, after sustaining two severe sieges, and finally Oxford capitulated on 20th June, the terms having been arranged with Fairfax at Marston. About this time Cromwell married his daughter Bridget to Ireton in

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Holton Manor House. A sequel of the war was the revolt of the Levellers, one body of whom were easily crushed at Banbury, while another body, who had marched to Burford, were sternly repressed by Cromwell and Fairfax. A memory of Worcester fight is given by the romantic escape of Captain Arthur Jones at Chastleton.

Of subsequent history there is little to tell. Among Oxfordshire worthies who live in history may be mentioned Lord Clarendon, who owned Cornbury after the Restoration; the Duke of Marlborough, who was presented by the nation with the Royal manor of Woodstock in honour of his victory at Blenheim; Warren Hastings, who was born at Churchill; and Lord North, who lived at Wroxton Abbey. The visits of William III. to Burford, and of Dr. Sacheverell to Bicester may also be touched on. About the time of the '45 the landowners of North Oxfordshire were keen Jacobites. The centre of disaffection was Cornbury Park, where it is said a party of insurgents were concealed in '45, and which the Young Pretender is supposed to have afterwards visited in disguise. The Oxford election of 1754 was an expiring flicker in favour of Jacobitism. The grievances of the Roman Catholic families were a more abiding cause of complaint, and we hear that William Fermor of Tusmore in 1788 had both a correspondence and an interview with Pitt on the subject of the removal of Catholic disabilities. In the nineteenth century there are but few points to record, e.g., the riots consequent on the enclosure of Otmoor, the attempt of Feargus O'Connor to colonise Chatterville (between Witney and Burford), and the disturbances caused by the speeches of Joseph Arch.

## ANTIQUITIES

### IX ANTIQUITIES

1. *Prehistoric*.—The tendency of authorities in recent times has been to assign these to earlier dates than formerly. Stone monuments which used to be called "Druidical" are now more usually described as Neolithic, and earthworks once considered Roman or Saxon are thought to be at least British, if not still earlier. Of stone monuments the most important is the circle called the Rollright Stones, near which are the King's Stone, a fine monolith, and the Whispering Knights, a cromlech. The Hoar Stone at Enstone is also a ruined cromlech. About 2 miles W. of it are two other monoliths, the Hawk Stone and Thor Stone. Another Hoar Stone, near Steeple Barton, is now only a heap of stones. S. of Stanton Harcourt are three remarkable monoliths called the Devil's Quoits. The ramparts of ancient camps are very frequent on the high ground in the N. of the county, some of the finest being at Ilbury, Madmarston, Tadmarton, Lyneham, and Chastleton. Farther S. they are rare, the Round Castle S. of Bladon and the Dyke Hills near Dorchester being nearly the only instances. Of ancient lines of entrenchment there are four, perhaps representing old tribal boundaries. They are Grim's Dyke by Ditchley, another Grim's Dyke between Nuffield and Mongewell, the Ems Ditch between Witney and Ducklington, and Aveditch near Kirtlington and Somerton. The Icknield Way at the foot of the Chilterns is an old British road. Barrows are rare, Lyneham, Leafield, and Asthall Barrows being the most important. A British village was discovered in 1857 N. of Standlake.

2. *Roman*.—Within the county are the sites of two



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Roman towns or villages, Dorchester, in which many Roman remains have been discovered, including a fine altar, and Alchester,<sup>1</sup> of which the site is just traceable in a meadow. They were connected by a Roman road, most of which can be traced. Another Roman road, Akeman Street, also passed through Alchester, and thence traversed the county from E. to W. A third, starting from Alchester, passed N.E. by Bicester out of the county. There are the remains of a large Roman villa with tessellated pavements near North Leigh. Others have been found at Stonesfield, Fringford, Wigginton, Wheatley and elsewhere, but of these nothing now remains *in situ*.

3. *Churches*.—Few English counties vie with Oxfordshire in the beauty and variety of its churches. The resident at Oxford may not realise this at first, because the two districts where fine churches swarm lie at the extremities of the county, to the N. and the W. In the N. are the splendid piles of Bloxham, Adderbury and Chipping Norton, while of hardly less interest are Swalcliffe, Great Tew, Broughton, Cropredy, Alkerton, Hanwell, and many others. In the W. the three most striking churches are Burford, Bampton; and Witney, next to which are Langford, Broadwell, Stanton Harcourt, Ducklington, Minster Lovell, etc. In the S.E. fine churches are more scattered, but here we have the great fanes of Dorchester and Thame, and smaller churches such as Iffley, Stanton St. John, Great Milton, and Great Haseley; and at the foot of the Chilterns, Chinnor, Lewknor, and Ewelme.

Oxfordshire churches are very difficult both to

<sup>1</sup>Of course these are the Saxon names only. The Roman names are unknown.

## ANTIQUITIES

describe and to classify, for they are rarely of one definite style. Indeed as a rule each church illustrates *all* the architectural styles.

*Saxon* remains are scanty. North Leigh tower is similar to S. Michael's, Oxford. Both are Saxon in style, though in date they probably overlap the Norman period. Other Saxon features are the tower of Caversfield, an arch at Bicester, two small windows at Swalcliffe, and possibly also the chancel-arches of Bampton and Langford.

*Norman* churches are rare and mostly small. Iffley is the finest. Other churches worth studying are Checkendon, Goring, Swyncombe, Crowmarsh Gifford and Cassington. A very large number of churches retain fine Norman doorways, chancel-arches and fonts, and a smaller number have Norman arcades.

*Transition-Norman* is usually found only in the nave-arcades and the chancel-arch of a church, the rest of which has been altered. This is frequently the case, but the work is not, as a rule, elaborate. Only two of the largest churches have Trans. work to an appreciable extent, *i.e.*, Bampton and Dorchester. Of the very late Trans., which is all but E.E., there are interesting examples at Langford, Great Haseley, and Alkerton.

Few churches are wholly or even mainly *Early English*, but good E.E. work may be seen in several, especially Witney, Thame, Bampton, Broadwell, Stanton Harcourt, Shipton-under-Wychwood, Great Milton, Standlake, Bucknell, Wigginton, and North Stoke. There are fine arcades also at Bloxham and Bicester. Of the last stage of the E.E., where it merges into the Decorated style, there are good instances at Piddington, Northmoor, Shilton, and Stanton St. John.

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*Decorated* work is the most characteristic in the county. Few of the more striking churches are without it, and every stage is well illustrated, from the very beginnings of geometrical tracery to the final stiffening of the curving lines into upright rigidity. Nearly all the fine group of North Oxfordshire churches, with Bloxham, Adderbury and Broughton at their head, are predominantly in this style. Most of these belong to the curvilinear rather than the geometrical period, but some of the finest (e.g., Bloxham, Broughton and Swalcliffe) show beautiful work in both periods. Two remarkable features are the frequent recurrence of grotesque heads on the capitals, and grotesque cornices. In the W., Witney, Broadwell, and Ducklington show the finest work. A striking characteristic both of E.E. and Dec. work in this part of the county is that many windows have interior foliation. In the S.E., Dorchester is a unique example of exquisite work, but Great Haseley, Great Milton, Lewknor and Chinnor also deserve mention. The best geometrical windows are at Great Haseley and Dorchester. Probably the two finest windows with flowing tracery are at Witney and Chipping Norton.

The best *Perpendicular* work is found at Burford, Chipping Norton, and Adderbury (chancel). Ewelme is entirely Perp., and also the smaller churches of Minster Lovell and Coombe. Perp. arcades are rather rare.

A great beauty of several churches is the spire. E.E. spires are at Witney, Bampton, Broadwell, and Shipton-under-Wychwood; Dec. spires at Bloxham, Adderbury and Broughton; and Perp. spires at Burford, Kidlington and Handborough.

4. *Monastic Remains*.—Nearly all the monasteries

## ANTIQUITIES

of Oxfordshire have perished with an utter destruction. The only three which show ruins are Godstow Abbey, the Prebendal House at Thame, and Shipton-under-Wychwood. Of the houses built on monastic sites some, such as Burford, Bruern and Cold Norton, have no monastic remains, others, such as Wroxton, Elvendon, Studley and Bicester, have just a few traces. In other cases the surviving buildings have been utilised for farms, such as Clattercote, the Minchery (Littlemore) and the Templars' Preceptory (Sandford). There is a fine hospital at Ewelme, and tithe-barns at Swalcliffe, Adderbury, and Upper Heyford.

5. *Castles and Castellated Mansions.*—Of most of these nothing remains but the grass-grown sites. Broughton and Shirburn Castles have survived as private mansions, and the Elizabethan Greys Court is built within the walls of an older castle. At Banpton and Hanwell the gateway of an old castle has been built into a later house.

6. *Domestic Architecture.*—In this Oxfordshire is singularly rich. The two earliest houses seem to be the Manor Houses at Cottisford (originally Trans.) and Coggs (E.E.). Stanton Harcourt, Woodstock High Lodge, and the ruins of Minster Lovell show interesting Perp. Of old Tudor mansions the chief are Mapledurham, Thame Park, Hardwicke House and Seenor. Princely Rycote has disappeared all but the chapel. Of the many fine Elizabethan and Jacobean houses the following are the most important—Chastleton, Wroxton Abbey, Burford Priory, Cornbury, Fritwell, Kelmscott, Shipton-under-Wychwood, Rousham, Pyrton, Water Eaton and Yarnton. Among more modern buildings the huge pile of Blenheim demands mention.

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### X CELEBRATED MEN

This account is not intended to include celebrities whose connection is with Oxford itself rather than with the county ; nor is it necessary to repeat names already mentioned in the historical summary. Apart from these many characters deserve mention.

*Poets.*—Chaucer and his family are heard of at Woodstock and Ewelme ; Milton's family at Great Milton, Stanton St. John and Shotover, and at Forest Hill is the register of his first marriage. Pope was a welcome guest at several mansions (see especially Stanton Harcourt, Tusmore, and Mapledurham). Shelley when an undergraduate often rambled on Shotover. The Upper Thames is associated with Matthew Arnold's familiar poems, and with the home of William Morris at Kelmscott. There is a sonnet of Wordsworth's commemorating his visit to Souldern parsonage ; and a short poem written by Tennyson after his wedding at Shiplake. For allusions to minor stars, Wither, Mickle and Shemstone, see Binsey, Forest Hill, and Henley respectively.

Other *literary associations* are scanty. Horace Walpole has left amusing accounts of his visits to Blenheim, Rousham, and Wroxton. In fiction the county is principally represented by Scott's *Woodstock*, Blackmore's *Cripps the Carrier*, and Mrs. Humphrey Ward's *Marcella*. Of antiquaries and local historians a few may be mentioned—John Leland, "the king's Antiquary," the "ingenious" Dr. Plot, and in our own times Mr. Beesley, the Rev. E. Marshall, and the Rev. J. C. Blomfield, historians of Banbury, Woodstock, and the Bicester deanery respectively ; and Mr. J. C. Parker, and his son Mr. James Parker,

## CELEBRATED MEN

our principal authorities on the architecture of the county.

The list of *divines* is a lengthy one, though the exclusion of Oxford is bound to make it unsatisfactory. It commences in Saxon times with Birinus, "the apostle of Wessex," and Archbishop Theobald. After Remigius transferred the See of Dorchester to Lincoln, the bishops of that diocese were active in this county, especially Alexander, who founded Dorchester Priory, St. Hugh, and Grossetête, builder of Thame Church. Later, William of Wykeham was a great builder, whose work can be traced at Adderbury and elsewhere. Launton is associated with the noble conduct of Bishop Skinner during the Commonwealth ; Chipping Norton with a story of Bishop Juxon at the same period ; South Leigh with John Wesley's first sermon ; and Littlemore with Cardinal Newman's secession. The Bishops of Oxford have long been domiciled at Cuddesdon. Other parishes are connected with various other cathedrals, Witney with Winchester, and Bampton with Exeter ; also Islip with Westminster Abbey. In all three of these parishes eminent ecclesiastics have resided.

*Statesmen and Warriors.*—To those already mentioned may be added Sir Francis Knollys and Sir William Knollys, who lived at Greys Court and Caversham ; the second Duke of Argyll, who had a house at Adderbury ; Sir John Cope, the unfortunate general at Prestonpan, who lived at Bruern Abbey ; and Lord Sidmouth, who lived at Fringford. Three judges may be mentioned—Sir Lawrence Tanfield, owner of Great Tew and Burford Priory, whose tomb is in Burford Church ; the notorious Scroggs, born at Deddington ; and the "hanging" judge, Page, buried at Steeple Aston. The Rochesters,

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father and son, who lie buried at Spelsbury, are a little hard to classify.

In conclusion, though it is impracticable to give a list of the more distinguished residents, it may be of use to specify those who represent the most ancient and honourable families in county history. Such are the Duke of Marlborough at Blenheim ; Lord Saye and Sele at Broughton Castle ; Lord North at Wroxton ; Lord Dillon at Ditchley, who is lineally descended from Sir Henry Lee, Ranger of Woodstock ; the Earl of Jersey at Middleton Stoney ; and Lord Camoys at Stonor Park. The Blounts have been four centuries at Mapledurham ; the Harcourts of Nuncham have owned Stanton Harcourt for 750 years ; and the Cottrell-Dormers of Rousham represent two of the oldest and most distinguished county families. The Earls of Effingham and Macclesfield, at Tusmore and Shirburn respectively, are comparatively new comers into the county.

## DESCRIPTION OF PLACES IN OXFORDSHIRE ARRANGED ALPHABETICALLY

**NOTE.**—For determining the position of any place the following data are usually given :—

(1) The distance of the place from Oxford by road.

(2) When the place is too far from Oxford itself, its distance from the nearest important town has been substituted.

(3) The distance of the nearest railway station is added, except when the place is easily reached from Oxford, or where the station is of little convenience (such as, *e.g.*, Watlington, or the stations on the Adderbury and Chipping Norton line).

All railway stations and important towns will be found in the map on the fly-leaf.

The following abbreviations are used for the architectural styles :—

Trans. = Transition Norman (*i.e.*, about 1160-1200).

E.E. = Early English (often called "thirteenth century," but really about 1200-1270).

Dec. = Decorated (often called "fourteenth century," but really about 1270-1370).

(The change from Geometrical to Curvilinear is dated about 1315.)

Perp. = Perpendicular (often called "fifteenth century," but beginning about 1370).

The styles overlap and run into one another so much that it is hardly practicable to date them exactly.

**ADDERBURY** (on the Oxford and Banbury road, 18½ miles N. of Oxford, and 3½ S. of Banbury; station on G.W.R.) is one of the most delightful towns in Oxfordshire. Most of the houses stand picturesquely round the green, which is a triangular plot of grass shaded with trees. W. of it is an old gabled house and garden bearing the date 1656, which has had some famous tenants, among them the dissolute Earl of Rochester (see



## OXFORDSHIRE

*Spelsbury* and *Woodstock*) and the second Duke of Argyll (Jeanie Deans' Duke). Pope, when the guest of the latter, wrote some complimentary verses, contrasting his host with the former tenant of the house. Both his estimate of the Duke and also Scott's in the *Heart of Midlothian* are now seen to be flattering. Somewhat to the W. lies the church, not far above the little Sor Brook, which twists round the hill on its way to join the Cherwell. The ancient rectory and tithe barn, N. of the church, add greatly to the effect. The spire is one of three which are conspicuous objects in this part of the county, and are thus distinguished in a local rhyme :—

Bloxham for length,  
Adderbury for strength,  
And King's Sutton for beauty.

In fact the Dec. tower and spire are squatter and less graceful than Bloxham, and less elaborately ornamented than King's Sutton.

The well-kept cruciform church is one of the finest in Oxfordshire. The general effect of the interior is beautiful Dec. The only earlier work is shown in some traces of E.E. ; but later work is found in the chancel, which, with the clerestory and roof of the nave, is early Perp., and in the clerestory of the transepts and the muniment room which are later Perp. The principal E.E. remains are in the transepts, and consist of graceful arcading on the N. and S. walls, and traces of old lancet windows blocked up in the E. wall. The main nave arcades also seem to be E.E., though they have been called Dec. by some authorities. The shafts and bases are octagonal, the latter showing the

## ADDERBURY

water-moulding, but the capitals and abaci are round. The Dec. work in many ways resembles Bloxham. The chief points to notice are the elaborate N. and S. doors with their porches; the fine series of external cornices, most of which show quaintly carved beasts, birds and flowers; and the beautiful pillars dividing the nave from the transepts, of which the N. pillar has four knights' heads on the capital, and the S. pillar four ladies' heads. The windows unfortunately had their tracery cut out in the "churchwarden" age, but they have been well restored, geometrical patterns having been given to the transept windows, and flowing patterns mostly to those in the nave. Some of the windows seem to have been copied from Bloxham. The clerestory windows are all Perp. Note how the raising of the transept roofs to form a late Perp. clerestory has turned into interior windows the easternmost pair in the earlier nave clerestory. Notice also in the nave aisles two arched recesses, one on each side, that to the N. being specially fine. In the N. transept is a quaint old aumbry; in the S. transept two good piscinæ; between which an old altar-slab has been replaced as a side altar. Near it are two very good brasses of a knight and a lady, 1460, and in the transept are the matrices of two others.

Between the nave and chancel is a splendid restored rood-screen, to which a rood-loft has recently been added, so that the old rood-stairs can be put to their original use, and the church surveyed from a novel point of view. The chancel itself is early Perp. and was built by William of Wykeman, whose arms may be seen above the E. window on the outside. The large windows have restored tracery, which is not entirely satisfactory. The canopies of the stone

## OXFORDSHIRE

eredos, and the larger ones which flank the E. window, are original, but the statues in each case are restorations. The sedilia and piscina are canopied and show excellent work of the period. Opposite to them on the N. side is an elaborate door leading to the muniment room, now used as a vestry, which has a large oriel window and a priest's chamber above it, reached by a newel staircase. The large bosses and corbel heads deserve attention, and may be accurately observed from the rood-loft. In one an old woman is blowing up a fire with bellows. On the chancel floor is an extraordinary brass to Jane Smith, "the which dyed the XXX day of February (*sic*) in the year of our Lord M<sup>C</sup>VIII (1508), on whose soul Jsū have mercy". There is another brass with inscription only, and a tablet to Thomas More, 1586.

*Adwell* (13½ miles E. of Oxford, ½ mile S. of the Oxford to London road) is a tiny remote village lying sequestered among fine trees. The church has unfortunately been rebuilt, but retains an original Trans. door. In the nave there is the effigy of a knight. Just N. are the beautiful grounds of Adwell House.

*Akeman Street*, the principal Roman road in the county, traverses it from E. to W. It enters the county at Alchester, 1½ miles S. of Bicester, passes near Chesterton, and then runs nearly due W. to Kirtlington, where it forms the N. boundary of the Park. It crosses the Banbury-Oxford road at Sturdy's Castle, and then cuts across the N. part of Blenheim Park to Stonesfield, after which it bends more S., and crosses the Oxford and Burford road near Asthall. A few years ago Mr. Haverfield examined its remains in Blenheim Park, and found

## ADWELL—ALKERTON

the roadway to be constructed of carefully laid stones fitted closely together and overlaid with gravel.

*Albury* (near Tiddington, the nearest station to Thame) has a church rebuilt by Rickman, but retaining a Norman font.

*Alchester*.—About  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile after passing Wendlebury, the road from Oxford to Bicester crosses a small bridge, and presently turns sharp N. close by the eleventh milestone. In the field which lies S. of the road between these points there are some low grass mounds, which, though no one but an antiquarian would suspect it, mark the site of Alchester, one of the two Roman towns of which traces are found in Oxfordshire. Little is known of the place, and even its name has not been preserved, for "*Ælia Castra*" only occurs in the forged itinerary attributed to Richard of Cirencester. It was situated at the junction of the three Roman roads in the county, Akeman Street, the road running from Dorchester over Otmoor, and the one running N.E. past Bicester towards Buckingham. It was partially excavated a few years ago and the remains of houses and a rampart were found. Probably it was a large village or small town.

ALKERTON (6 miles W. of Banbury) is a twin-village with Sherington. They are situated only  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile apart on opposite sides of the upper valley of the Sorbrook, which here forms a miniature ravine, less than 100 feet deep, but clear-cut, steep-sided and pleasant with trees. The way to the church is past the beautiful Jacobean rectory, which is only separated from the churchyard by a narrow railing. The most celebrated rector was the learned Thomas Lydyat (d. 1646), whose unfortunate lot

## OXFORDSHIRE

was taken by Johnson in the *Vanity of Human Wishes* to point the moral of the scholar's life :—

There mark what ills the scholar's life assail,  
Toil, envy, want, the patron and the jail . . .  
If dreams yet flatter, once again attend,  
Hear Lydyar's life and Galileo's end.

The church is very interesting. It is built on a hillside, with the nave, central tower and chancel on three different levels and connected by flights of steps. The architecture represents mainly two transition periods. The existing church was built early in the E.E. style, when it had not yet completely shaken off all Romanesque features. Thus the W. tower arch is essentially fine E.E., but the N. and S. arches are plain round Norman, and the nave arcade would be E.E. but for the characteristic Trans. capital. There is also a plain round-headed priest's door. The S. door and porch, with the fine stoup, seem somewhat later in style, but the font belongs to the original church. The two upper storeys of the tower are early Dec. But the main alteration was during the transition to the Perp. style (about 1380-1390), when the square-headed windows were inserted in the nave, the clerestory built and the fine cornice added on the S. side. The grotesque figures have been thought to symbolise the life of the Black Prince. They are essentially similar to the cornices which are associated with Dec. work at Adderbury, Bloxham and Hanwell. The chancel was rebuilt in the sixteenth century, and is poor and late Perp. Close to the altar are a defaced effigy of a warrior and a tablet to a minister's wife, d. 1653. There is a belfry staircase which was also connected with the rood-loft.

*Alvescote* (station on G.W.R.) has a cruciform

## ALKERTON—ARDLEY

church prettily situated on rising ground among trees. Structurally it is of small interest—E.E. largely altered to Perp. and with the chancel rebuilt. It contains, however, some noticeable points. There is a low side window with two stone desks. Built into the N. wall of the chancel are the remains of a stone reredos, and farther E. a strange opening of uncertain use. Note also the E.E. font, the two squints, hour-glass stand, and late brass (1579).

*Ambrosden* (12½ miles N.E. of Oxford, 2 miles S.E. of Bicester Station) is on the borders of Otmoor. The foundations of the old manor-house, destroyed in the eighteenth century, may be seen in a field W. of the church. One of the owners began a direct road to Oxford, but only finished it as far as Merton. Of early work the church retains a plain Norman N. door and late E.E. tower, on which have been carved in later times some curious geometrical figures. There are also two E.E. pillar brackets, now standing one on each side of the altar. Later, (1) the nave with S. aisle and arcade was rebuilt in the Dec. style; (2) the chancel was made early Perp., all the other windows of the church being also altered to Perp. and the clerestory added. The exterior of the S. aisle has good buttresses with niches, and a beautiful open cornice of quatrefoils, with a row of heads and ball-flower below. Note also the pillar-piscina, the blocked entrance and exit of rood staircase, and the fresco of the Last Judgment. The vicarage dates from 1638, but has been modernised.

*Ardley* (14 miles N. of Oxford, 5 miles N.W. of Bicester) is a small village in a bleak situation. The church has a late Dec. chancel and W. tower, separated by a "Georgian" nave built in 1789. The saddle-backed tower is called Dec. by all author-

## OXFORDSHIRE

ities, so that the almost round-headed belfry window may be, like the font, a relic of an older church. The chancel has late Dec. windows, but is entered by an earlier arch, possibly E.E. It contains (1) a double piscina, E.E., but of strangely rude workmanship; (2) a remarkable low side window, now walled up, but showing inside the original grating which was probably not glazed, but closed with a shutter; (3) an elaborate Dec. recess, which may be a founder's tomb or an Easter sepulchre. Due W. of the church is a wood in which there are the foundations and moat of a vanished castle. It was one of the "adulterine" castles demolished in Henry II.'s reign.

*Ascott House* (8 miles S.E. of Oxford,  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile beyond Stadhampton) was a seat of the Dormer family. Here William Dormer, Sheriff of Oxford (see *Milton*), built a house in 1662, but it was burnt down almost at once and never rebuilt. The extensive grounds are worth a ramble. From the road the entrance pillars and the magnificent double avenue of limes are very conspicuous. On either side is a strange octagonal building, one of which is a dovecot, the other called the "blacksmith's shop". Farther to the S. and S.W. are the ruined fishponds and garden, on a gate of which can still be read:—

Si bonus es, intres, si nequam, nequaquam.

There was a beautiful E.E. and Dec. chapel near the road, but it was wantonly destroyed about 1825. Its site is marked by a decrepit elm.

*Ascott-under-Wychwood* (station on G.W.R.) is a village on the Evenlode. The church is very mixed in style. Of the original Norman structure there remain the nave arcade and the chancel walls

## ASCOTT HOUSE—ASTHALL

with two small windows. The subsequent alterations illustrate every style, but none are of real interest. The Perp. font and sedilia may be noticed. The tower is Trans., but the top storey has been partly altered to Perp., the original windows having had square labels added to them.

ASTHALL (16½ miles W. of Oxford, 4½ miles W. of Witney Station) is a village on the Windrush, 1 mile N. of the Witney and Burford road. About 4 miles from Witney the road makes a descent to *Worsham Bottom*, a spot full of supernatural terrors in the old coaching days, for it was thought that on dark and stormy nights "Black Stockings," a little evil-faced figure clad in dark velvet and hose, suddenly sprang out and grabbed at the horses' reins. A little farther on the road ascends to *Asthall Barrow*, an ancient landmark, now banked up with stone and crowned with a dark fir-clump. The Roman road, *Akeman Street*, ran close by, passing through the village, which is a mile off, and reached by taking the turning to the right. It is one of the most attractive of Oxford villages, the handsome church and fine restored Elizabethan manor-house standing close together, on a well-wooded slope stretching down to the Windrush. The framework of the church is Trans., in which style are the nave arcade, the chancel arch, the arches leading to the N. transept or chapel, and the font. The deeply splayed lancet N. of the church may also be in this style. Subsequently the chancel was altered to very late E.E., the N. chapel given Dec. ornaments, and the nave windows altered, mostly to Perp. There is also one Perp. window in the chancel and a Perp. tower. The beak-heads on the chancel arch are very rare in interior work. The three late E.E. windows



## OXFORDSHIRE

should be noticed. The two S. of the chancel have sills used as sedilia, one of which has a stone elbow. The N. chapel has two late Dec. windows, one filled with old glass, and contains a rich Dec. tomb with a female effigy under a canopy. It also has a curious stone altar with a piscina attached to one of the legs. West of the N. aisle is a geometrical window. The roof corbels are good.

*Aston*.—There are three villages of this name on the hills just W. of the Cherwell.

*North Aston* (15 miles N. of Oxford, 1 mile W. of Somerton Station) is just E. of the main Oxford and Banbury road. It is a highly picturesque stone-built village, with a spacious green, shaded by elms. The church lies in the well-wooded park, close to the large but uninteresting manor-house, indeed so close that the tower has actually had to be built into the church. It was restored by Sir Gilbert Scott, who prolonged the N. aisle to overlap the chancel as far as the S. aisle already did. The style is Dec., the tower, clerestory and only two other windows being Perp. additions. The Dec. windows have mostly intersecting tracery. The font is of Charles II.'s time. The stairs to the rood-loft remain. In the chancel is the fine alabaster tomb of John Anne and his wife, d. 1416. He is wearing the S.S. collar. On the sides is a remarkable series of monks and angels. The tower contains a "majesty," i.e., a sitting figure of God the Father, with angels below bearing the shield of the Annes.

*Steeple Aston* (13 miles N. of Oxford, 1 mile N.W. from Heyford Station) is also a pretty village which stands embowered in trees, on the top of a hill sloping up from the Cherwell. The present church was originally E.E., of which the nave

## ASTON—ASTON ROWANT

arcades remain. The chancel arch is somewhat later, perhaps early Dec. The Norman-looking font is considered by Parker a later imitation. The windows in the S. aisle are geometrical, but restored. In 1362 a N. chancel aisle was built, with reticulated E. window, piscina (now hidden by organ) and Dec. arches. The W. tower is Perp., also the N. aisle of nave (which was rebuilt in 1842). Finally the chancel was altered to debased Perp. in 1684. The chancel screen has been much repaired. Many of the benches have carved ends. In the chancel aisle is the heavy tomb of Justice Page (d. 1741), satirised by Pope as a "hanging judge":—

Slander or poison dread from Delia's rage,  
Hard words or hanging, if your judge be Page.  
—POPE, *Satire* i., 81, 82.

An old embroidered cope was long used as the altar frontal. E. of the village lies a "folly," looking like a ruined castle. It was built to terminate the vista looking N. from Rousham.

*Middle Aston*, half-way between the villages, was the home of Justice Page. The manor-house where he lived has been rebuilt.

ASTON ROWANT (15½ miles S.E. of Oxford; station on G.W.R.) is a small village under the Chilterns, just N. of the Oxford and London road. The large church is very ancient, a pair of small windows in the nave (one of which now opens into the porch) being early Norman or even Saxon. The church was badly treated in the "church-warden" period, when it lost most of its windows, so that its history is hard to read. The existing old windows (chiefly on the N. side) and the internal details seem to show that it was almost

## OXFORDSHIRE

entirely Dec. The tower is early Dec. with a very fine tower arch. The only certain E.E. feature is the handsome font of Purbeck marble, though some authorities also call the S. door E.E. Traces of Perp. are confined to two or three windows and the rebuilt clerestory. There are several points of interest : (1) the Dec. marble stoup ; (2) two recesses under geometrical canopies in the N. aisle ; (3) a Dec. canopied recess in chancel, under which a tomb with floreated cross has been placed ; (4) an odd square Perp. niche above the pulpit ; (5) squint on N. side ; (6) roodstairs and doorway ; (7) low side window (Perp.) with transom and traces of a hinge ; (8) two piscinæ ; (9) original altar slab. There are three somewhat fragmentary brasses dated 1437, 1441 and 1470, and the matrix of a brass with Norman-French inscription.

Vous qa par ici passets  
Pur lalme Sire Hughe le Blounte prietz  
Le corps de qi ici gist  
lalme receive IHV CRIST ✠

There is also a Jacobean monument dated 1618.

*Avesditch.* (See Somerton.)

*Bablockhythe.* (See Northmoor.)

*Baldon.*—There are two villages of this name. It is a pleasant ride from Oxford to take the first turn left after Nuneham Courtney, from which a lane leads past the two Baldons into the Oxford and Watlington road.

*Marsh Baldon* (6 miles S.E. of Oxford) is set round a spacious green. The church has a striking Dec. tower with octagonal squinched top. The S. door with its wooden porch is also Dec. ; other features are Perp. The N. aisle was rebuilt in 1890. There is a Perp. piscina, a little old glass,

## AVESDITCH—BAMPTON

two late brasses dated 1618 and 1651, and a large picture of the Annunciation.

*Toot Baldon* ( $5\frac{1}{2}$  miles S. of Oxford) has a little E.E. church standing on a hill, from which there is a fine view over the Chilterns. Its exterior has been restored into common-placeness, but inside there are two good E.E. arcades (about 1200-1210). The columns on the N. side show early stiff-stalk foliage, which in the W. respond has not wholly shaken off its Trans. form. There is a plain Norman door (N.), and a Dec. S. transept.

*Balscott* (5 miles W. of Banbury) is a pretty little village, situated, like nearly all the villages on the marlstone plateau (see Introduction), on a slope descending to a well-marked hollow. The interesting little church is almost entirely beautiful late Dec., with a quaint tower over the S. porch. The only traces of other styles are the Norman font, a solitary lancet, and the upper storey of the tower, which is Perp. There are two square low side windows, a N. door with strange carving, two good piscinæ and a niche for the sanctus bell. Opposite the church is a fine old gabled farmhouse, showing a two-light window under a round hood-moulding.

BAMPTON ( $15\frac{1}{2}$  miles W. of Oxford ; station on G.W.R.) may be considered the capital of South-West Oxfordshire, the flat country stretching N. of the Thames, and formed by the broad belt of the Oxford clay. It is a region of meadow-land and waving grass, with the slow and solitary Thames winding through it, of stone-built villages gracefully embowered in trees, and of fine churches. Those who can find no charm in so flat a country should remember that the poet Morris fixed his home in

## OXFORDSHIRE

the midst of it at Kelmscott (see *Kelmscott* and *Langford*). This region was formerly common land called "the bush," and up to 1750 there were no roads across it, so that travellers to and from Bampton had to make the best of their way across the scrub. It may be added that even now the roads are none too good.

The history of Bampton centres round two old houses. *Ham Court*, to the W. of the village, recalls Aymer de Valence, Earl of Pembroke, one of the most powerful barons in Edward II.'s reign, who built a castle here in 1315. For his relations with Piers Gaveston, who called him "Joseph the Jew" from his pale olive complexion, see *Deddington*. The castle subsequently descended to the Talbots, Earls of Shrewsbury, who held it till about 1700. The only remaining part is the gate-house, which has been turned into a dwelling, and now forms part of a farm. It shows a Dec. window and a good newel stair. The other old house is the *Deanery*, W. of the church, a fine Elizabethan mansion with gables and mullioned windows, which used to be a summer residence of the Dean of Exeter. The connection of Bampton with the Exeter diocese was begun by Leofric, first bishop, who was born here, and the Dean and Chapter still hold the right of presenting to the living. On 26th April, 1645, Cromwell defeated here in a cavalry skirmish a regiment led by Col. Vaughan.

The church is one of the grandest in the county, and full of beautiful objects. It is cruciform with central tower and spire. The rude chancel arch shows herring-bone work, and may be as early as Saxon. A pointed arch has been built in above it, as at *Headington*, to relieve it of part of the weight.

## BAMPTON

The lowest storey of the tower is plain Norman, with a good interior arcade, one window of which opens into the N. transept. The tower piers, however, on which it rests, have been subsequently changed to Trans., with pointed arches and billet moulding. Finally the belfry storey and the remarkably graceful spire (E.E.) were added. The spire is one of a group of four in this part of the county which claim kindred with the Oxford Cathedral spire. The original Norman church must have been nearly as large as the present one. The chancel walls are Norman, with an exterior corbel-table. There is an early Norman window in each of the transepts, and a fine Norman S. door. The nave was altered to E.E. about the same date that the spire was built (c. 1240). It has two arcades quite plain, lancet-triplets grouped and foliated and with beautiful interior foliation, and two trefoil-headed doorways. The transepts were altered at the same time, but not so completely. In Dec. times two good geometrical windows, one in each transept, were inserted; also the E. and W. windows were added, showing plain intersecting mullions, and the very beautiful W. door, which is surrounded by a row of the four-leaved flower ornaments between two rows of ball-flower. The Perp. additions are unimportant, comprising the clerestory and some other windows in the transepts, the S. porch, and the chapel to the E. of the S. transept. In the chancel there are: (1) very beautiful E.E. sedilia and piscina; (2) interesting Dec. stone reredos, showing Christ and the Twelve Apostles, each under a separate canopy; (3) Perp. Easter sepulchre of two stages with fine canopy; (4) old stalls with misereres and poppy-heads; (5)

## OXFORDSHIRE

three brasses dated 1429, 1500 and 1633. In the N. transept is an interesting shallow chapel (E.) containing (1) knight in armour much defaced ; (2) large Dec. canopied niche, with a king and queen for corbels ; (3) two smaller niches. The S. transept has, besides the E. chapel, one to the W., with a very graceful E.E. arch leading partly into it, partly into the nave aisle. There is also here a large tomb dated 1603. There are several piscinæ in various parts.

*Bampton Aston* (13 miles W. of Oxford *via* Bablockhythe) is a parish with a new church, but contains in it *Cote House*, a Jacobean mansion, now a farmhouse, with a fine hall and oak staircase.

BANBURY (station on G.W.R.) is the second largest town in Oxfordshire, though much smaller than Oxford, its population in 1901 being only 12,968. It lies in the upper valley of the Cherwell, which here runs through a wide flat basin about 300 feet above sea-level, and from which the hills rise very gradually, so that the immediate surroundings of the town are less picturesque than those of North Oxfordshire in general. Formerly it was the seat of some small manufactures, notably of plush and horse-girths, but now it is merely an important agricultural centre, its sole manufactory being for agricultural implements. An old proverb, variously quoted, commends Banbury for "cheese, cakes, and zeal". The cakes are presumably "Banbury cakes," a sort of compromise between a tart and a mince-pie, still industriously hawked at the neighbouring railway stations. The "zeal" may originally have been a misprint for "ale,"<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See the interesting story, too long for quotation, of its occurrence in *Camden's Britannia*, told in *Beesley's History of Banbury*.

## BAMPTON ASTON—BANBURY

but as Banbury was really remarkable for its Puritan spirit, the joke which associated it with "cakes and ale" was too good to be lost, and many writers refer to it. Thus in Ben Jonson's *Bartholomew Fair* Zeal-of-the-land Busy is a Banbury baker, who had given up the making of cakes, "because they were served at bridals and other profane feasts". Richard Braithwaite refers to Banbury as

Famous for twanging Ale, Zeal, Cakes and Cheese,  
and in his *Drunken Barnaby* has the amusing lines :—

To Banbury came I, O profane one !  
Where I saw a Puritane one  
Hanging of his cat on Monday  
For killing of a mouse on Sunday.

Among other things this Puritan spirit has made the people of Banbury notorious among iconoclasts. The town used to possess a renowned cross, a castle, and a fine church, and the inhabitants have destroyed all three. The cross (the "Banbury Cross" of the nursery rhyme, the "fine lady" of which is said to be the witch of Banbury) fell before a burst of Puritan intolerance in 1602. The castle was utterly demolished after the great Civil War, and the beautiful church, "more like a cathedral than a parish church," was blown up with gunpowder in 1790 to avoid the expense of restoring it. It is quite in keeping that one of the "architects" who abetted its demolition was the notorious Wyatt. The history of the town centres round its vanished castle, which was originally built by Alexander, Bishop of Lincoln, in 1125. In the great Civil War the Puritan sentiments of the townsmen and the influence of their neighbour, Lord Saye and Sele



## OXFORDSHIRE

(see *Broughton*), naturally led them to take the side of the Parliament. The outbreak of the war in Oxfordshire was an attack on Banbury by Lord Northampton, to prevent the transport of some guns to Warwick (8th Aug., 1642). When, after the battle of Edgehill, Charles arrived here and summoned the castle, it at once surrendered to him, and was strongly garrisoned by the Royalists. It stood in consequence two remarkable sieges, being strenuously defended by Sir William Compton, younger son of the Earl of Northampton, just mentioned (who was killed early in the war), and only nineteen years old. In August, 1644, it was besieged by Col. John Fiennes and a body of Parliamentarians drawn from the adjacent counties. The siege lasted thirteen weeks, and ended in the relief of the garrison by Sir Henry Gage on 26th October, 1644. The second siege resulted in the garrison marching out with the honours of war on 8th May, 1646. The town had suffered so severely, both from the exactions of the Royalist garrison and from the fighting in its very midst, that the inhabitants petitioned Parliament for the immediate demolition of the castle, which was at once carried out. In 1649 Banbury was one of the places where the mutiny of the Levellers broke out (see also *Burford*), but the mutineers were persuaded in a few days to disperse. Their leader was a desperado called Captain Thomson, who escaped, but was surprised and killed ten days later.

There is not much to see in the town. The streets, which a century ago gained the place the epithet of "Dirty Banbury," are now well kept and pleasant, and the broad road running N. and

## BANBURY

S. is planted with trees. At the principal cross-roads, the probable site of the old cross is occupied by a modern one, erected in 1858. Near it is the huge ugly structure which was built a century ago when the parish church was wantonly destroyed. Parker calls it "totally unfit for a Christian church". It is some consolation that it has cost the town far more than repairing the ancient building would have done. Of the ancient castle there only remains a small part of the wall, on the N. side of a building called Castle Cottage. The bridge over the Cherwell dates from the thirteenth century. Some terraces called the Bear-garden, on the hillside, just N. of where the Bloxham road enters the town, were formerly supposed, but quite without reason, to be a Roman amphitheatre.

Banbury has several very good old houses, some of which show gables with barge-boards and pargetted fronts. The finest one is N. of the High Street, and was erected about 1600. It has three gables with semicircular oriel windows below, and a sun-dial with inscription "Aspice et abi". A passage near it leads N. into the market-place, on the W. side of which are three fine old gabled houses. The central one of these, now over a grocer's shop, was the *Old Unicorn Inn*. It also shows three semicircular windows under gables, and a pair of wooden folding gates with the date 1648. The other two are corner houses. In Parson's Street, which leads W. from the Market-place, there is a yet more interesting old inn, "Ye Olde Rein-deere". At the entrance are a pair of folding gates with the date 1570. There is a tradition that they originally belonged to the castle. The inn itself is dated 1624. It contains the beautiful *Globe Room*

## OXFORDSHIRE

(admission 3d.). This is panelled in old dark oak, has a large mullioned window and a very fine plaster ceiling, hardly to be equalled in beauty by any in Oxfordshire. The name is derived from a large globular chandelier, which used to hang near the entrance.

One mile S.W. from Banbury is *Grouch Hill*, a round summit with a tree-clump, 500 feet high. On the day before the fight of Cropredy Bridge the rival armies manœuvred to gain possession of it.

*Barford St. John* ( $5\frac{1}{2}$  miles S. of Banbury) is in the Swere Valley just N. of the stream. The small church has a Norman S. door and font and a Trans. chancel arch, but the windows are Dec. and Perp. insertions. There are two good Dec. piscinæ. The chancel is rebuilt, and the octagonal tower over the S. porch is modern. In the *Moat Farm*, just S. of church, there is a two-light foliated window (blocked), and there are traces of a moat in the field by the Swere below.

*Barford St. Michael* (6 miles S. of Banbury) is just S. of the Swere, not  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile from the other village. The church has much old work, but is complicated. The N. and S. doors, the font, and the basement of the tower are pure Norman. The N. door is especially fine, and is surrounded by a double row of beak-heads. The chancel arch, W. window, and upper storey of the tower are Trans. (though in the latter Perp. windows have been inserted E. and W.). The nave arcade and the pretty double piscina in S. aisle appear to be E.E., but all the windows not yet referred to are Dec. Of these the geometrical E. window is the earliest and the S.W. window the latest. There is a Dec. piscina (in chancel), a square low side window, a



GLOBE ROOM, BANEURY



## BARFORD ST. JOHN—BAYARD'S GREEN

fine Perp. rood-screen and a Perp. S. porch. The tower is E. of the S. aisle, an unusual position.

*Barton* is the name of three villages which lie close together in the valley of the little Dorne.

*Steeple Barton* (13 miles N. of Oxford, 2½ miles W. of Heyford Station) is about a mile W. of the Oxford and Banbury Road. The church is Dec. with a few late Perp. and modern insertions, and an ivy-clad Perp. tower. The interior is gloomy and the windows uninteresting, but the early Dec. arcade has capitals ornamented with fine grotesque heads, a peculiarity found in several North Oxfordshire churches,<sup>1</sup> and usually distinctive of Dec. work. The S. doorway, the font, and the S. aisle piscina are also Dec. features worth notice. Half a mile E. of the church is *Barton Abbey*, a modern mansion occupying the site of an old monastery. W. of the Oxford road, near the eleventh milestone, is *Maiden Bower*, said to be a British earthwork, but not easy for non-antiquarians to make out, and about ½ mile farther on the road is *Hoar Stone*, a heap of stones which was once a cromlech.

Proceeding W. through *Middle Barton* we reach *Westcott Barton* (14 miles N. of Oxford). The little church looks wholly Perp. from the outside, doors, windows and tower being in that style. Inside it has a Norman S. arcade and a Trans. chancel arch. There is a plain font, probably Norman, and a Perp. rood-screen, with traces of the rood-loft stairs.

*Bayard's* or *Baynard's Green* is a name given in the ordnance map to the point where the Oxford and Brackley road is crossed by the Bicester and

<sup>1</sup> *E.g.*, at Adderbury, Bloxham, Drayton, Dunstew and Hampton Poyle. At Woodstock alone they are E.E.

## OXFORDSHIRE

Banbury road. This appears to be a mistake, since the real Bayard's Green, where Richard I. ordered tournaments to be held, was near Brackley in Northamptonshire. Perhaps two similar names have been confused.

*Beacon Hill* is a projecting bluff of the Chilterns, which is very prominent from the Oxford and London road, just before it winds up among the beech-forests of Stokenchurch Hill. Though over the 800 feet it is not quite the highest point, since Shirburn Hill, about  $1\frac{1}{4}$  miles farther S., reaches the height of 837 feet.

BECKLEY (6 miles N.E. of Oxford) is an extremely pretty village, standing on high ground backed by Stow Wood, and with a prospect far and wide over the flats of Otmoor. It is on the Roman road between Dorchester and Alchester, and this, together with its commanding position, made it of importance in early times, so that the manor has been held by many distinguished persons, commencing with the Norman baron, Robert D'Oilly (see Introduction). It was conferred by Henry III. on his brother Richard, King of the Romans, who built here a magnificent palace. He was the most striking figure in Oxfordshire in the thirteenth century, a noted Crusader and church-builder, and remarkable for princely munificence. But unluckily for his memory his name inevitably recalls the Lewes windmill. Of his palace the moat only can be traced. The manor subsequently belonged to Piers Gaveston and Hugh Despenser, the favourites of Edward II., and at the Reformation was one of the many estates which fell to Lord Williams (see *Thame*). The church is late Dec. and Perp. with a central Dec. tower. The chancel and some windows

## BEACON HILL—BERRICK

in the S. aisle are Dec., the N. aisle Perp., and the arcades and clerestory later Perp. Note, (1) the stoup; (2) the squint; (3) hour-glass stand; (4) curious stone desk near the font. Three or four windows have some old glass. There is a good turret for the tower stairs, and a niche on the E. of the tower for the sanctus bell. The scene of Blackmore's tale, *Cripps the Carrier*, is laid at Beckley. In 1862 a Roman villa was discovered here, but a fortnight later not a trace of it was left (1).

*Begbroke* (5 miles N. of Oxford) is a little oasis on the dull Woodstock road. The little Norman church has been over-restored, but it retains its original S. door, chancel arch, and saddle-back tower, in the upper storey of which a Dec. window has been inserted. The chancel windows have suffered by restoration, and the square-headed Perp. windows in the nave are modern imitations. The font is Perp. The aumbry has its original door. The picturesque old gabled manor-house is now St. Philip's Priory (R.C.).

*Benson* (12 miles S.E. of Oxford, 2 miles N. of Wallingford Station) was in ancient times on the debatable land between Wessex and Mercia. In 777 Offa defeated the West Saxons here, and re-annexed the district to Mercia for a season. Later the town became of importance in coaching days, as its large inns testify. It has now sunk into a village. The church has an E.E. font, and two good arcades, either late Trans. or very early E.E., of which some capitals have stiff-stalk foliage. Otherwise it is disappointing. The chancel is modern E.E., and the tower nondescript.

*Berens Hill.* (See Ipsden and Dorchester.)

*Berrick* (14 miles S.E. of Oxford) is the name



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of two villages which are practically continuous, *Berrick Salome* and *Berrick Prior*. The church was restored in 1889, when the liberal use of timber and red tiles gave it a strange unecclesiastical appearance. Such a mode of restoration seems to have been suggested by the fact that both tower and S. porch are of wood. There is a Norman S. door and font, and a Dec. chancel with piscina. The nave and S. chapel are late Perp., but retain few signs of their origin. An earlier E.E. lancet has been built into the chancel. The interior is very pleasing, since there is a good roof of open woodwork dated 1615, and a quaint wooden gallery at W. end dated 1676.

BICESTER (12½ miles N.E. of Oxford ; station on L. & N.W.R.), in spite of its name, was never a Roman town. Mr. Haverfield has shown that the word "chester" in proper names meant merely an inhabited enclosure, not necessarily Roman. N. of the Tyne it was used fairly often for non-Roman sites ; but in England S. of the Tyne this application is rare. Bicester is one of these exceptions, since no Roman remains have been found, nor any evidence of Roman occupation. The name in Domesday Book is *Berencestra*, which may mean the "ceaster" of *Birinus* (*cf.* *Berens Hill*), or be equivalent to *Burnchester*, the first syllable being akin to the neighbouring *Burnwood Forest*. The occurrence of "chester" in *Alchester* and *Chesterton*, 2 miles S., may have suggested its use in Bicester as well.

Bicester is at present a market-town, and well known as a hunting centre. It is on flat ground and has little picturesqueness. It has been visited by Queen Elizabeth and Dr. Sacheverell, both of whom received ovations. In 1185 the *Priory of*

## BICESTER

*St. Edburgh* was founded, very little of which is now left. The site may be seen in a yard just S.E. of the church, but the only remaining building is some distance off. This may be reached by taking the first turn left when going from the station towards the town. It was part of the hospice, now called *Priory Cottage*, and has a good Perp. window on the E. side and the heads of three others on the N. In the adjoining wall is an old door.

The church has an interesting history. The triangular arch E. of the N. arcade is a fragment of a Saxon church left remaining when the cruciform early Norman church was built.<sup>1</sup> The Norman walls still remain, but all features have been altered, except the three plain arches, which once supported a central tower. About 1250-1260 the S. wall of the nave was broken through to form an E.E. arcade and aisle. The arcade shows elegant clustered columns and characteristic foliage. The arch leading from the aisle to the S. transept seems of the same date, though the retention of the square abacus is strange. The S. door also is good E.E., but the beautiful exterior cornice is Dec. Late in the Dec. period the N. wall was also broken through to form an arcade and aisle. The Norman string-course, once exterior to the whole church, and still visible outside the N. transept, can be seen also inside running above the later Dec. arcade. One column has a small niche, perhaps used to contain the baptismal oil. There are two original Dec. windows in the N. aisle. The N. chapel between the chancel and transept is also Dec. in origin, but it is entered by a Perp. screen, and has two Perp. windows at the E.

<sup>1</sup> This arch must have originally led into a W. aisle of the transept, for it seems that the nave had as yet no aisles.

## OXFORDSHIRE

end. One of these used to light an upper room, to which entrance was given by an exterior door and staircase. Other Perp. alterations are the clerestory, the tower, the N. porch, which had a parvise over it, and shows traces of a stoup, and the windows N. and S. of the transepts. No windows except those already mentioned are original. All those S. of the church had their tracery cut out in the eighteenth century, and are now weak restorations with geometrical patterns. The chancel has now no original feature, save an E.E. door with a good hood-moulding. There is a newel staircase in the transept, leading to the leads. The font is E.E. of an odd polygonal pattern. A tomb which was saved from the priory has had a strange destiny, being distributed in three pieces about the church. The effigy is near the font; some ornamental figures are built into the S. wall, and other ornaments have been attached to one of the S. pillars.

*Binsey* (2 miles N.W. of Oxford) is the one Oxfordshire parish which lies S. of the Thames. It is between the Thames and the Shire Brook, a backwater which is the county boundary from Godstow as far as Oxford. It is best reached from Oxford by going by *Port Meadow* to *Medley Lock*, sung of by George Wither :—

In summer time to Medley  
My love and I would go ;  
The boatmen there stood ready  
My love and I to row.

Not every one will recognise in the halting rhyme and grammar the author of "Shall I wasting in despair". Here cross the river and take the tow-path for a little way, when a turn to the left across Binsey Common leads to the village. The little church is

## BINSEY—BLACK BOURTON

at the end of a causeway across the low meadows,  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile farther on. Close to the W. end is the celebrated well, sacred to St. Margaret, and supposed to have been granted miraculously to the prayers of St. Frideswide. The name Binsey may mean the "Island of Prayer," in reference to this. The nave was originally Trans., and has a fine S. door showing both zigzag and dog-tooth. The chancel is E.E. The windows are either lancets or Perp. insertions. One has a blocked low side window below a transom. There is a good E.E. font, and a pillar piscina.

*Bix* ( $2\frac{1}{2}$  miles N.W. of Henley) is a little village on the Oxford and Henley road, just before it descends the last hill. The view during the descent is fine, since the hills overlap beautifully in front. The church has long been destroyed and a new one recently built. About  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles off, in the deep hollow to the N., called Bix Bottom, is another small desecrated church. It has simple but interesting Norman features, especially a chancel arch with a blocked squint on either side.<sup>1</sup>

*Black Bourton* (17 miles W. of Oxford) is a village close to Alvescot Station on the Oxford and Lechlade line. The interesting little church has a Norman priest's door (S.) and a Trans. arcade (N.), but is otherwise almost entirely E.E., most of the windows being lancets. A late and poor Perp. clerestory and tower have been added, but there is a good Perp. stone pulpit. The font is probably

<sup>1</sup> There is some confusion between these two churches. According to Parker and the old Ordnance Map the destroyed church is Bix Gibwen, the desecrated one Bix Brand. Most maps however name the *desecrated* church Bix Gibwen. The latest Ordnance Map throws no light.

## OXFORDSHIRE

Norman, piscina and aumbry E.E., and low side window Perp. The N. chapel contains monuments to the Hungerford family, of which the earliest is 1591.

*Bladon* (8 miles N.W. of Oxford) is really the parish church of Woodstock, of which Woodstock Church is only a chapel-of-ease. It has, however, lost its ancient church, which was destroyed in 1804. The ugly building which was erected instead of it has lately been made more conformable to Gothic taste. It contains the tomb of Lord Randolph Churchill. Nearly opposite is a fifteenth century house, with a round chimney and Perp. windows. On the hill S. of the village 1 mile distant is an ancient camp called the Round Castle.

*Blenheim.* (See Woodstock.)

*Bletchington* (8 miles N. of Oxford, 1½ miles E. of Kirtlington Station) is a small stone-built village on a bare plateau, but backed by the abundant trees of Bletchington Park, the seat of Lord Valentia. From the plateau there are good views, especially E. over Otmoor and the Chilterns. The mansion was rebuilt last century. The old house was fortified in the time of the Civil War, and considered one of the outlying posts defending Oxford. On 24th April, 1645, Cromwell, after routing Lord Northampton's cavalry (see *Islip*), chased some of the fugitives here, and though he had neither foot nor artillery summoned the house to surrender. The commander, Col. Windebank (son of the Secretary of State to Charles I.), was unfortunately induced by the terrors of his young wife to capitulate at once. For this he was condemned to death by court-martial, and, Charles refusing to interfere, was shot, probably in Gloucester Green, Oxford, then called Broken

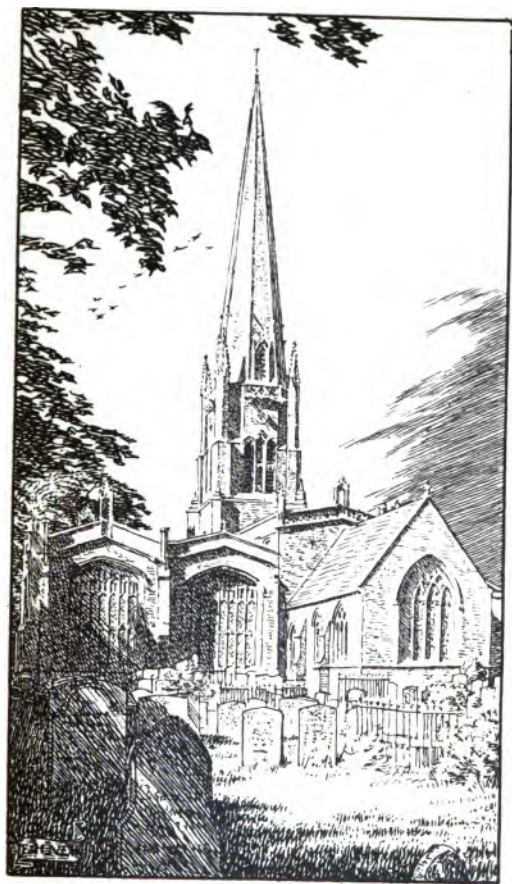
## BLADON—BLOXHAM

Hayes. There is a medallion portrait of Cromwell on nearly the last house on the Islip road, being the house where, according to the tradition, he passed the night. The church is close to the house. It shows Perp. features, but is restored and of little interest. The square tower is the best part.

BLOXHAM (3 miles S.W. of Banbury) is a bright little town built on both sides of a small valley. On the N. side is All Saint's Grammar School, with fine buildings designed by Street. In 1896 it was conveyed to the Provost and Fellows of Lancing, and is now conducted on the same lines as the Woodard schools in Sussex. On the S. is the church with its magnificent spire, famous "for length" as the local rhyme says (see *Adderbury*), but it may well be added "for beauty" too. The church is one of the finest in the county, perhaps even *the* finest, though in a district of such splendid churches it is hard to be dogmatic. It has been well restored and is kept with the most reverent care. There is so much excellent Dec. work, especially in the windows, that this is the dominant note. Yet it is far from being a "one-style" church. The remains of Norman work are highly curious. These are found (1) in the chancel, (2) in the S. door. The chancel was originally Norman of about 1150-1160, but it has been transformed to early Dec. of about 1290-1300. A plain Norman door had been retained, and the chancel arch, though made pointed, has kept its old side columns. But the most unique feature is that the Norman mouldings have been built in as frames for the Dec. windows. These mouldings are good, and among them may be noticed some beak-heads. The S. door is good Trans., but nearly above it on

## OXFORDSHIRE

the inside is an earlier blocked Norman arch. The porch is E.E. (There are two chambers above it, reached by a flight of stairs from the church. The lower is E.E., the upper Perp.) The only other E.E. parts are the nave arcades, of which the S. arcade has beautifully clustered pillars. The whole nave with its aisles was once E.E., but no other features remain unaltered except those already mentioned. The exquisite Dec. work was added at different dates. The earliest is perhaps the shallow N. transept, which may be contemporary with the alteration of the chancel. Its most striking feature is the pillar separating it from the N. aisle. This is diamond-shaped in section, and has an elaborate capital, including the grotesque heads so characteristic of Dec. work in North Oxfordshire. The N. window of the transept is good geometrical. There are two geometrical windows of the same date in the W. part of the S. transept, one of which is very beautiful, with interlacing triangles in its head. The later Dec. work includes the N. aisle, W. door, and the tower and spire. The N. aisle as altered in this period has three good windows of flowing tracery, the finest being on the W. side which shows a cross in the tracery with our Lord's head in the centre. The N. door and porch are very beautiful Dec., and above runs a cornice of grotesque figures, also characteristic of the North Oxfordshire churches. The splendid W. door is surrounded by elaborate Dec. mouldings, one a running pattern of leaves and ball-flower, and has above it a sculptured representation of the Last Judgment. The tower and spire (198 feet high) are rich with late Dec. work, some quite flamboyant in character, which deserves the most careful study.



"BLOXHAM FOR LENGTH"





## BLOXHAM—BRIGHTWELL BALDWIN

Perp. additions are the clerestory, the large windows E. of both aisles, and the *Mikombe Chapel* on the S., which is rich Tudor, and separated from the S. aisle by a characteristic arcade of two bays. It contains several large windows and an original stone altar, above which is a panelled reredos, in which some statues have been lately replaced. The font is also Perp. Other points of interest are the fine roof, partly new, partly restored, the beautiful screen with traces of original colour, some remains of the rood-stairs, some old tiling which has been extensively reproduced, traces of fresco over the N. door, the small square low side window, and *two* niches for sanctus bells. At the Joiners' Arms, N. of the church, there are a Perp. doorway and an E.E. arch a little behind it.

*Bodicote* (2 miles S. of Banbury) is a village which grows medicinal plants, such as rhubarb and belladonna. The church is of no interest. It was originally E.E., largely altered to Dec. and Perp.

*Bourton Magna* (3 miles N. of Banbury) has a small church which had been desecrated, but was rebuilt and reconsecrated in 1863. The chancel alone remains of the old church, showing a few original Dec. features, such as the pretty E. window and the piscina.

*Brightwell Baldwin* (13 miles S.E. of Oxford) is a pleasant secluded village about a mile W. of Cuxham on the Oxford and Watlington road. The church stands on a knoll, with the abundant trees of Brightwell Park on one side, and on the other the village inn, which shows in front woodwork taken from the old manor-house in the park when it was burnt down. The church is almost entirely late Dec., there being no overt traces of an

## OXFORDSHIRE

earlier style. The details are simple but pleasing, and the church is spacious and well kept. The best window is one of flamboyant character, E. of the S. aisle. This window and a large inserted Perp. window in the chancel have some old glass. The other Perp. additions are the tower and a N. chapel. The latter has unfortunately been cut in two by a large wall, on the W. side of which are some ugly memorials to the Stone family. The E. part, now used as a vestry, contains a piscina (one of three in the church). The W. part has two old tombs with brass inscriptions on the top (1547 and 1562). There are also two other good brasses, one to John Cottesmore (1439), and another very fine and early one to John ye Smith with his wife and thirteen children (1371). There is a plain font and a few old tiles.

*Britwell Salome* (about 1 mile S.W. of Watlington ; 14½ miles S.E. of Oxford) now forms one parish with *Britwell Prior*, whose church has been destroyed. Britwell Salome Church has been rebuilt, but retains a fine Norman door, and a brass dated 1495. In the churchyard is a magnificent yew-tree. The name Britwell is a corruption of Brightwell, both names referring to the clear springs which rise in the chalk hills.

*Brize Norton* (15 miles W. of Oxford ; 1 mile N. of Bampton Station) has a church mostly E.E. with some Dec. alterations, but retaining a good Norman S. door with a Trans. porch, and a beautiful Trans. font. The E.E. parts are somewhat heavy and early, *i.e.*, the tower and the nave with S. aisle, in which are two inserted Dec. windows. The chancel has more admixture of Dec. The two E. windows are geometrical. On the S. side

## BRITWELL SALOME—BROADWELL

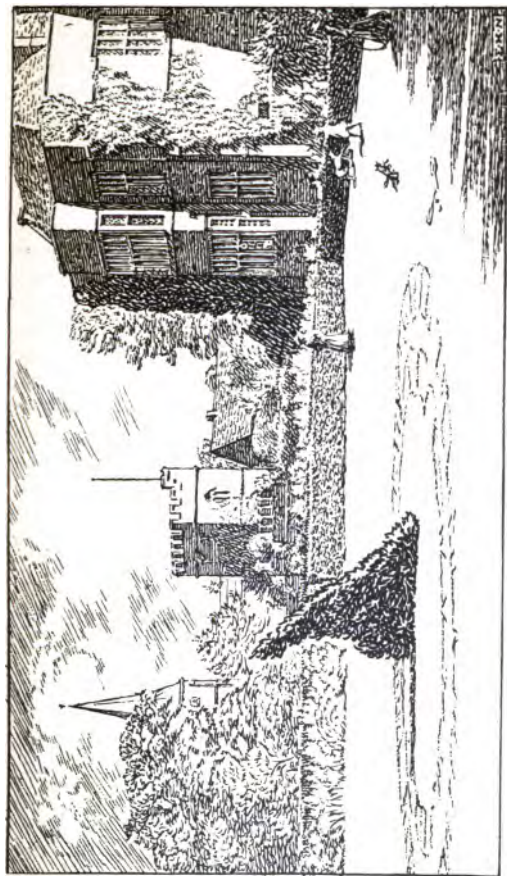
there is a low side window, a triple lancet with interior foliation and three plain sedilia below, and an odd-looking Dec. piscina. On the N. the chancel is separated from the aisle by an arch, and a curious Trans. window, which serves as a kind of squint. In the aisle is the remarkable tomb of John Daubigny, 1340. There is a restored Perp. screen.

BROADWELL (about 18 miles W. of Oxford, 2 miles W. of Alvescot Station) is a pretty stone-built village with several old-looking houses and a magnificent church. The original Norman church was probably oblong, including the present chancel and nave and a low W. tower. The Norman buttresses and string moulding, partly internal on the N. side, can still be seen surrounding the chancel. In the Trans. period the church was enriched by a fine S. door, showing both zigzag and dogtooth, together with a somewhat later porch and a font. Next came the N. transept (early E.E.), with the arch leading to it, which shows large and splendid stiff-stalk foliage. It is only a little later than the round-headed N. door, which shows the very latest phase of Trans. Later on in the E.E. style the chancel arch was built, together with the arches leading into the S. transept and N. chancel aisle. The effect of these arches is to make the church look very E.E., but although the whole church must have been altered at this time, there are few windows of the period remaining, only a triple lancet in the S. transept and another in the chancel aisle. At the same time, however, was built the splendid E.E. belfry and spire, which claims kindred with Witney, the Cathedral, Bampton and Shipton, but is perhaps the most beautiful

## OXFORDSHIRE

of the group. A pretty little piscina in the S. transept is also E.E. The windows in the chancel are Dec. insertions. Two are geometrical, one of them, the E. window, which has internal foliation, an elaborate multifoil. The third has graceful flowing tracery, and also shows internal foliation. The low side window is round-headed and may belong to the original church. Four inserted Perp. windows, two in the nave and two in the N. transept, complete the church as it exists to-day. There is a newel staircase N.E. of the N. transept. The rood-staircase has disappeared, but there is a very curious long slit, to enable the altar to be seen from the stairs. In the churchyard is the stump of a cross, raised on steps. Not far from the church are the gate-posts which led to the fine manor-house, long since burnt down.

**BROUGHTON CASTLE** (2½ miles S.W. of Banbury, 20 miles N. of Oxford) is certainly the most interesting building in the county, if Oxford itself be excluded. It is the ancestral seat of the Fiennes (Lords Saye and Sele). Originally it belonged to the De Broughtons, from whom William of Wykeham acquired it by purchase, leaving it to Sir Thomas Wykeham, his great nephew. In the next generation it passed by marriage to the Fiennes family, in whose possession it still remains. At present it is tenanted by Lord Algernon Gordon-Lennox. The first Lord Saye and Sele who held the castle was killed at Barnet, 1471. His father had been murdered by Jack Cade, and there is a large picture of him in the castle entreating Cade for his life. The most celebrated member of the family was William Fiennes, first Viscount Saye and Sele, nicknamed "Old Subtilty" for his wisdom



BROUGHTON CASTLE (FROM S.W.)



## BROUGHTON CASTLE

and caution, who took a leading part in concerting resistance to Charles I. in 1640-41. In a room still called the "council chamber" secret meetings of the Puritan leaders took place, attended amongst others by Hampden, Pym, St. John, Essex, and Harry Vane the younger. When the Civil War broke out, Lord Saye and Sele organised the N. of Oxfordshire on behalf of the Puritans, and is said to have secretly drilled soldiers and lodged them in the castle. After Edgehill the castle surrendered at once to Charles, having no means of defence, and Lord Saye and Sele being absent. He had been at Oxford shortly before, where he had warned the colleges that they must be ready to give up their plate when called on for the service of the Parliament. But he marched away without actually requisitioning it, and the plate was to have a very different destination! It seems strange that this Puritan leader ended his life as Lord Privy Seal to Charles II. The badge of his office may be seen in the hall.

*The castle is shown on Wednesdays after 3 p.m.* It lies on low ground in the well-wooded valley of the Sor Brook, which feeds a beautiful wide and deep moat, running all round the castle. Apart from the moat the situation seems little defensible. The architectural history of the castle belongs to three different periods.

(1) The oldest parts are Dec., and are said to have been built by Sir Thomas Broughton about 1300. To this style the main walls belong, but four or five windows are the only outside indications of it. Nevertheless much of the interior in the E. part of the house shows good work of this period, especially the vaulted passage and the staircases to which it



## OXFORDSHIRE

leads, the old dining-room, chapel, and priest's room, and one or two other apartments.

(2) The Perp. portions date from the time of Sir Thomas Wykeham, to whom permission to crenellate was granted. Of the changes made affecting the main building there only remain the lower embattled part to the E., containing the kitchen, and a few windows in various parts, especially two large ones facing E. But the fine detached gate-house to the N., together with the line of wall stretching E. from it, at the edge of the moat, are in this style; also the curtain wall which faces W. and shows the marks of bullets.

(3) The Elizabethan work is due to the Fiennes, and was built in the second half of the sixteenth century. The change not only affected much of the interior, but completely transformed the exterior aspect of the castle by the addition of projections, large mullioned windows and gables. They are most marked in the W. half of the building, which may now be considered wholly Elizabethan both inside and outside. Since the sixteenth century no further change has been made.

The castle is approached from the N. through the gate-house. The visitor is first admitted into *the hall*, originally Dec. but now entirely Elizabethan. It has a fine ceiling with pendant bosses, and contains several suits of armour, and a purse of Charles II. W. of it is the *state dining-room*, where note the interior porch with inscription added after the Restoration, "Quod olim fuit, meminisse minime juvat". Above it is the *state drawing-room*, now used as a bedroom. Both these rooms are Elizabethan, with fine oriel windows and plaster ceilings. The drawing-room ceiling should be compared with

## BROUGHTON CASTLE

the other fine ones in Oxfordshire (see *Banbury* (Globe room), *Chastleton House*, and *Burford Priory*). On the stairs to the S. are many portraits, among them Lord Saye and Sele ("Old Subtilty"), by Zuccherò ; Anne of Denmark (Queen of James I.), also by Zuccherò ; Col. Nath. Fiennes (the "root and branch" man) ; Mrs. Nath. Fiennes, by Lely ; also Lord Burleigh and Charles I. At the top of the staircase is the "council chamber" (see above), a plain square room. The secret meetings of the Puritan leaders here seem to have been pretty notorious in the neighbourhood, and it was popularly supposed that they entered the castle by means of an underground passage. Close by is the western platform, a walk on the leads, whence the grounds are well seen. Between the W. and E. parts of the building stretches the *long gallery*, which has several portraits, among them Sir John Eliot, Prince Rupert, and Cromwell refusing the Crown. Above it and under the roof are the "barracks," where soldiers were quartered before Edgehill. They are reached on the E. by a newel oak staircase called "Mount-rascal". In this part of the castle an oubliette or secret staircase has lately been discovered.

The E. part of the castle contains nearly all the oldest work. The *chapel* is one of the earliest domestic chapels still remaining. It is good Dec., remarkably lofty, with two geometrical windows, a piscina, an altar stone with five crosses and some old tiling. It has a priest's room which was originally vaulted, and three remarkable squints high up in the wall, and communicating with rooms on the floor above. One of these rooms is Queen Anne's bedroom ; a second, which has two large Perp.

## OXFORDSHIRE

windows, is called the armoury. Other rooms on this floor are King James's bedroom and the workshop (which has Dec. windows). On the ground floor is the *old dining-room* (Dec.) with a vaulted ceiling, and surrounded by *linen panelling* of Tudor date. Round three sides of the ground floor runs a very beautiful vaulted passage (Dec.) communicating at one end with a straight staircase (also vaulted) leading to the chapel, and at the other end with a newel staircase, which in the original Dec. building was the only means of communication with the rooms above.

More charming even than the interior are the views of the grand old pile from the gardens or from the walk which runs outside of the moat. The church lies a little N. It is very interesting, being almost entirely beautiful Dec. The Dec. tower (W.) with broach spire is particularly graceful, and there is a good W. door showing the ball-flower. Inside, the nave with its wide and lofty S. aisle seems to belong to the geometrical period, the chancel to the curvilinear. The arcade separating nave and aisle is very E.E. looking, but is considered by authorities to be early Dec. Both nave and aisle have Perp. clerestories. The Norman font with its cable moulding must belong to an earlier church. Of the windows those facing E. are particularly fine. The E. window of the S. aisle is geometrical, with a double triangle in the head (*cf. Bloxham*). It has an interior multifoil curtain-arch and above it on the outside a fine canopied niche. The E. window (partly restored) is of six lights with elaborate flowing tracery. The square-headed Dec. window S. of the chancel should also be noticed. There is a most beautiful Dec. stone screen, though the diaper



BROUGHTON CASTLE (FROM N.E.)

1

2

3

4

## BROUGHTON POGGS

work on the E. side is modern. The sedilia and piscina (Dec.) are also elaborate and beautiful. Scattered about the church are the tombs of the former owners of the castle: (1) Sir Thomas Broughton has his monument and effigy in a Dec. recess in the S. aisle, somewhat spoiled by absurd colouring. (2) The effigy of another Broughton knight has been placed on an altar-tomb between aisle and chancel, showing the Wykeham, Saye and Fiennes arms. (3) S. of chancel is the elaborate altar-tomb of Sir Thomas Wykeham and his wife, with recumbent effigies in alabaster. The panelling on the wall behind was connected with a canopy over the tomb. (4) In the S. aisle is a canopied altar-tomb (Tudor) to one of the Fiennes. (5) The celebrated William, first Viscount Saye and Sele (died 1662), and his wife are commemorated by two black slabs, resting on a tomb ornamented with shields. There are also two brasses (at E. end of S. aisle) dated 1414 and 1666; a monument on the S. wall to two Fiennes who died in infancy, 1658 and 1666; and a tomb with a double cross on it. There are many memorials to later members of the Fiennes family both on the floor and the walls.

*Broughton Poggs* (about 20 miles W. of Oxford; 3 miles N. of Lechlade Station) is a small village close to the Gloucestershire border. It mostly hides itself among trees away from the road, and may easily be confused with its neighbour, *Filkins*, a brand-new village just N. of it with church to correspond. Broughton Poggs Church is very early Norman (or even possibly Saxon), to which an E.E. chancel has been added. The chancel arch with its two squints, the saddle-backed tower, the

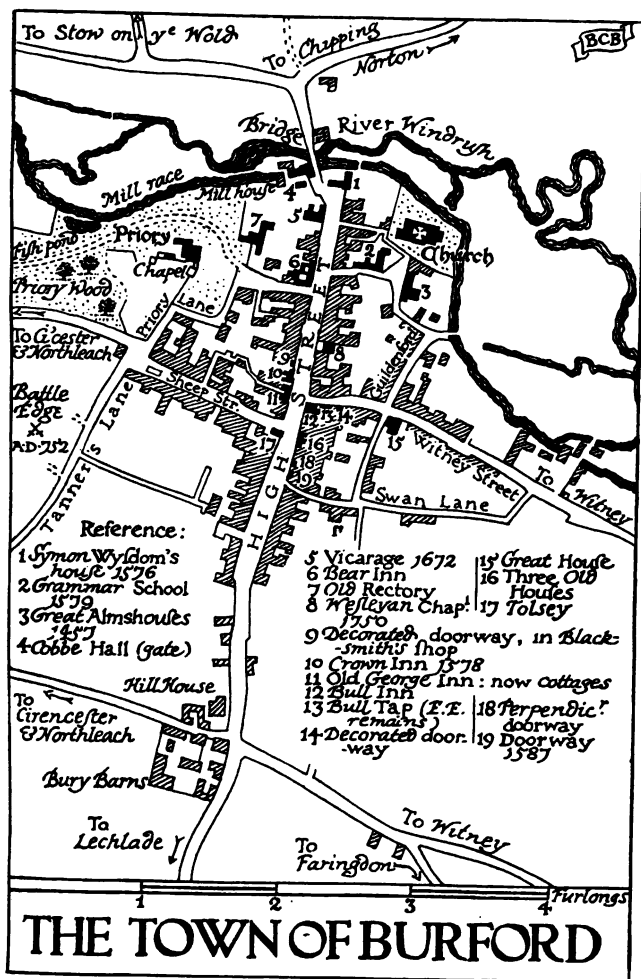
## OXFORDSHIRE

font, and two doors and one window in the nave are all original Norman. Some later windows are inserted in the nave. There is a pretty E.E. piscina.

*Bruern Abbey* (near the railway about half-way between Shipton-under-Wychwood and Chipping Norton Junction) is on the site of an old Cistercian abbey. The present house is partly brand-new, partly older. This part however seems to contain no feature of the original abbey, but to belong to a later house, inhabited amongst others by General Cope, who was defeated at Prestonpana, 1745. The abbey fishponds still remain.

*Bucknell* (14 miles N. of Oxford, 3 miles N.W. of Bicester Station) has a beautiful unspoiled church. The E.E. nave and chancel are separated by an old Norman tower, to which a Perp. upper storey has been added. The nave clerestory is also Perp. The original Norman church seems to have included transepts with W. aisles, since there are double round arches (now blocked) on either side, of which the W. ones (now filled with Dec. windows) may have been meant to lead into the aisles. All the E.E. windows are lancets, the work in the chancel being particularly graceful. The nave has two good doors, of which the S. door is elaborate and has a fine stoup. Note also : (1) piscina ; (2) two low side windows ; (3) Jacobean pulpit ; (4) brass plate dated 1638. The oldest part of the manor house (S. of the church) bears the date 1702, but it has been much modernised.

**BURFORD** (5 miles S. of Shipton Station, 18½ miles W. of Oxford *via* Witney) is a quaint old-world town, with more relics of the past than any other in Oxfordshire. The principal street,







## BRUERN ABBEY—BURFORD

long and picturesque, climbs steeply from the bridge over the Windrush up the hill lying S. of it. Formerly it was a thriving market-town, with a celebrated fair, and well known for its manufacture of saddles, woollen cloth and paper. But the stream of traffic has passed it by, the railway running up the Evenlode, not the Windrush, valley, so that the town has fallen from its old importance. Its history begins far back in Saxon times, when a synod to fix the date of Easter was held here in 685, and attended by Æthelred, King of Mercia, and Archbishop Theobald. Not long afterwards the proximity of the town to the Thames Valley, the debatable land between Mercia and Wessex, involved it in the eternal disputes of these kingdoms. The town joined Wessex in a revolt against Æthelbald, King of Mercia, who in 752 was defeated at Battle Edge close to Burford. In memory of the victory the townsmen used on Midsummer's Eve to carry in procession a dragon clearly representing the royal standard of Wessex. In Edward I.'s reign Burford was one of the four Oxfordshire boroughs which returned members to Parliament in 1306. This Parliament only sat for one day, so that Burford may be said to have had a member for one day only. Part of the town's importance came from its nearness to the royal forest of Wychwood, in which the townsmen had the privilege of hunting every Whitsunday. There is a letter extant from Queen Elizabeth's council forbidding this in 1593, because the plague was then raging. Later on this right was commuted for the present of two bucks and a fawn, which were delivered to a procession headed by a boy and girl, styled "the Lord and Lady". In the evening was

## OXFORDSHIRE

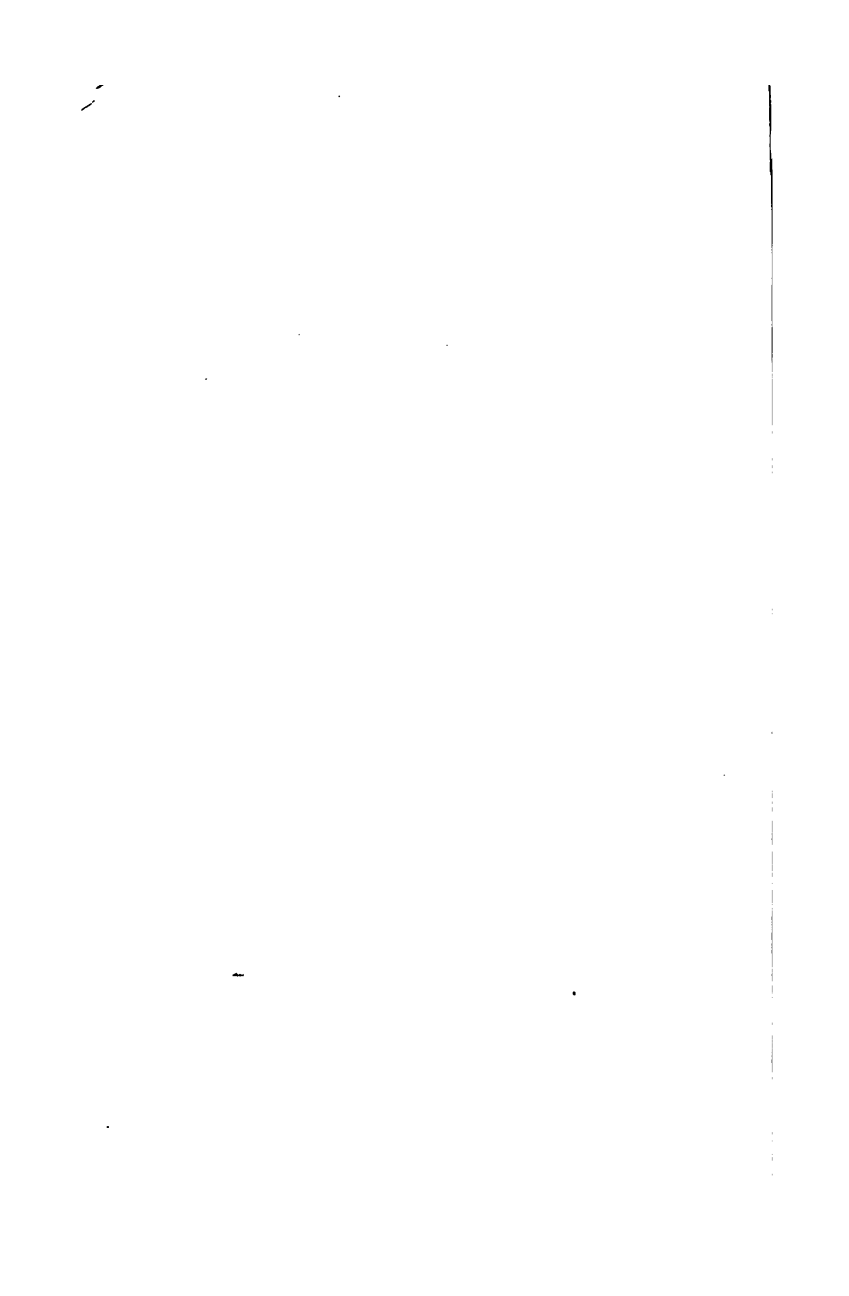
doubtless held a "Burford bait," a phrase proverbial for an over-hearty meal. During the Civil War there were skirmishes at or near the town, one of them being the surprise of Sir John Biron on 1st Jan., 1643, when marching to Oxford. But far more important was the defeat of the Levellers in 1649. The main body of these mutineers, marching N. from Salisbury to join other insurgents, tried to cross the Thames at Newbridge, but, finding it guarded, swam the river higher up, and made their way to Burford. At midnight, 14th-15th May, Cromwell and Fairfax burst into the town, and stamped out the mutiny, the mutineers only firing a few shots from the windows. The main body of prisoners was shut up in the church ;<sup>1</sup> and on the 17th two corporals and a cornet were shot against a stable wall W. of the churchyard, the other prisoners looking on from the leads of the church. Cromwell then pardoned the rest and brought them back to their allegiance. Burford has been much favoured by royal visitors, of whom Queen Elizabeth was the first in 1574. Charles I. passed through the town in his retreat from Oxford before Waller and Essex in June, 1644, and again on his return seventeen days later. Charles II. visited the town three times. On his first visit he was presented with some of the famous Burford saddles. A like present was made to William III. on his visit in 1695. The King "received them with much grace, and ordered them to be specially reserved for his own use" (Macaulay).

The ruins of the *Priory* lie W. of the town, on a well-wooded slope above the Windrush. Of the

<sup>1</sup> See inscription on font; described later.



BURFORD PRIORY



## BURFORD

small priory or hospital which existed here there are scanty records and no buildings. At the Dissolution it was granted to Edmund Harman, whose tomb is in the N. aisle of the church. The next owner, Sir Lawrence Tanfield, Chief Baron of the Exchequer (see also *Great Tew*), built here a magnificent Elizabethan mansion. His daughter married Henry Cary, Lord Falkland, and their more celebrated son, Lucius Cary, inherited in 1625 the estates of his maternal grandfather, both at Burford and Great Tew. In 1634 he sold the Priory to William Lenthall, burgess of this town (see also *Henley*), who became famous as Speaker of the Long Parliament. Lenthall retired here on Charles II.'s accession, and died in 1662. He is said, though the assertion has been questioned, to have been deeply penitent on his deathbed for his share in Charles I.'s execution. The Priory remained in his family till 1829. In 1808 it was rebuilt, the new building being less than half the size of the old one, though its more striking Elizabethan features were preserved. It is now a ruin, highly picturesque, but damaged by neglect and decay. The fine front has three gables. Under the central one is the porch, above which are the Lenthall arms. Entering the door, we pass by a passage into the central hall, which is lit by a lantern. Beyond is the grand staircase with a good plaster ceiling. On the first floor is the old drawing-room, which also has a very fine plaster ceiling, now, alas! going to ruin, and a stone fireplace with the Lenthall arms, much defaced by scribblers. The chapel is to the S. and almost detached, being connected only by a raised terrace, which runs from a door in the drawing-room to a gallery N. of the chapel, and

## OXFORDSHIRE

resting on pillars. Just below this gallery is a curious representation of the burning bush with an angel on each side. The style of the chapel is later than that of the house, the windows showing elaborate debased tracery. The altar is on the S. The beautiful and romantic grounds stretch W. in a series of hanging woods, sloping to the Windrush.

The magnificent *church* lies lowest of all the town buildings, with the Windrush flowing quite close to its N. wall. West of the churchyard, near the wall against which the Levellers were shot, is a Saxon stone coffin, dug up on Battle Edge. In size, fineness of detail, and irregularity of shape the church is only second to Dorchester Abbey. Of the original Norman there remain only the W. door, and the central tower, which rests on four massive piers, and has a lantern surrounded by good though simple arcades. The whole church seems to have been altered into the E.E. style, and a second wholesale alteration has transformed nearly all of it to Perp. The tower well illustrates both changes. When the upper storey and the graceful spire (Perp.) were set upon the Norman tower, the E.E. arches, which had been cut to lead into the transepts, were blocked by lower Perp. arches, which act as buttresses. Traces of E.E. are also found : (1) in the lower part of the chancel walls, where sedilia, piscina and aumbry are all E.E. ; (2) in *both* transepts, especially the blocked lancet in the N. transept, which shows it extended further N., and the arch with characteristic foliage leading from the S. transept to the nave aisle ; (3) in the chapel to St. Thomas of Canterbury (described later), the earliest of the many chapels, most of which are Perp.

The odd shape of the church is due to the

## BURFORD

addition of these chapels, and to its junction at the S.W. corner with the *Sylvester aisle*, formerly a separate chapel dedicated to the Virgin Mary and St. Anne. Judging from a blocked round arch on its N. wall, it was contemporaneous with the Norman church, but was altered like the rest of the church, first to E.E., then to Perp. Of the E.E. period there remain three lancets (N.), two of which have been re-opened, also a blocked door (S.), with a defaced stone "Calvary" above it. When the chapel was altered to Perp. most of the N. wall was thrown down, and the somewhat narrow S. aisle uniting it to the nave was built. Between it and the chapel of St. Thomas was formed the S. porch, which contains very rich Perp. work. Outside is a panelled façade of three storeys, with niches containing headless figures. Inside is a good fan-tracery roof.

The church is full of objects of interest. The *Sylvester Chapel* is named after the tombs of the Sylvester family from 1568 to 1889, several of which are of a monotonous pattern. At first they lined the S. wall; then when space failed they were piled one above the other with an odd effect. On the N. side is a nameless altar-tomb, and a monument with brass dated 1611. The nave and its aisles are wholly Perp. On the floor near the tower is a remarkable brass to "Jan Spycer and Alys his wyff," 1431, with a strange rhyming inscription in old English. The wooden pulpit is Perp. In the W. window have been collected all the fragments of old glass. W. of the N. aisle is the octagonal *font*, which is fine Dec. On the lead at the top is scratched "Anthony Sedley, 1649, prisoner," obviously done by one of the Levellers when confined in the church. Near the font there are



## OXFORDSHIRE

baptistery sedilia, and an aumbry for the holy chrism. In the same aisle is a monument to *Edmund Harman* (of the Priory), 1569. In the N.E. bay of the nave is *St. Peter's Chapel*, mostly of oak, an interesting shrine whose history is obscure. The figures in the reredos are modern, except St. Peter himself, "which was found in the church, but headless". The N. transept is called the *Bell-Founder's Aisle*, after Edward Neale, bell-founder, who lies buried here with his wife Elizabeth. The quaint epitaph should be read. Here also is buried Speaker Lenthall, but at his own request he has no monument. E. of the transept is *Tanfield Aisle*, enclosed in handsome screens and with a good roof. Here is the gorgeous tomb of Sir Lawrence Tanfield (died 1625). The deeply pathetic inscription was written by Lady Tanfield. It ends thus :—

Love made me poet, and this I writt,  
My harte did doe yt, and not my witt.

On the E. wall are a squint and the interesting remains of what was probably a relic chamber. E. is the *sacristy*, which is good early Perp., with a groined roof, stone altar and piscina. In the chancel, besides the E.E. features already mentioned, there are two beautiful canopied Perp. niches, flanking the altar. Statues of St. John and the Virgin have been replaced in them. S. of the chancel is *Bartholomew's Aisle*, so called from some comparatively modern tombstones. There are three altar-tombs without inscriptions, of which two are early Perp. The outside door has a stoup. The S. transept is called the *Leggare Chapel*, from an inscription round the outside of the S. window. The fine altar-tomb in the centre is supposed to

## BURFORD

belong to the same family. This chapel was once very rich. To the E. is a wide multifoil arch, and in the S.E. corner are mutilated niches and a piscina. W. of the transept is the Chapel of St. Thomas of Canterbury, which is raised upon a small crypt. This is the oldest chapel in the church, and retains some E.E. arches and an E.E. piscina. It has also a Perp. squint and a turret with a staircase leading to two upper rooms.

Immediately S. of the church are the *Alms-houses* and the *Grammar School*. An inscription on the former states that they were founded by Richard, Earl of Warwick, in 1457, and rebuilt in 1828. The rebuilding has fortunately not injured their good Perp. front. The real founder was Henry Bishop, but the earl (the celebrated King-maker), who was lord of the manor, only gave permission to found them on condition that he might be declared the founder. The deed in which permission was given is still extant, with the earl's seal and personal signature. On the Grammar School there is a plate stating that "it was founded by Symon Wysdom, 1579". The buildings were almost entirely rebuilt in 1868.

A walk up High Street is full of interest. Ancient gables, doorways and mullioned windows are seen on every hand, only some of which can be briefly noticed. Starting uphill from the old bridge over the Windrush, we have first (L.), facing up the street, an old gabled house with an inscription stating that it was built by Symon Wysdom in 1576 and given to the Grammar School. On the right are in succession first the gateway of Cobbe Hall (the hall was taken down in 1872), next to it the vicarage with the date 1672. Somewhat

## OXFORDSHIRE

higher up is the old *Bear Inn*, with a fine, though small, oriel window. Here Priory Lane diverges right. To the N. of it is an old house called the Rectory. Returning to High Street we presently reach a blacksmith's shop (R.), inside which are the sides of an old doorway, showing ball-flower moulding. A little farther (R.) is the *Crown Inn*, with a fine doorway dated 1578. Beyond it (R.) are three gabled houses with a wide depressed archway under the middle one. These were once the old *George Inn*, where Charles I. slept during his visit to Burford. On a window-pane is an inscription of four lines, signed Samuel Pepys, 1666, but the name is certainly not genuine. Higher up (still R.) we reach the *Talsey* or town hall (where tolls used to be paid). It is fifteenth century in style, and was raised on stone piers, the spaces between which have been walled up. Since the corporation was dissolved in 1863, the building has lost its use and is falling into disrepair. Just opposite (L.) are three old gabled houses, the finest in Burford, two ornamented with barge-boards. The most N. of these contains two very fine old mantelpieces. The house next to it on the N. has a good E.E. cellar with quadripartite vaulting radiating from a central pillar. Five houses above the three ancient ones (still L.) is a Perp. doorway, and two doors yet farther up a doorway dated 1587, with monogram of Symon Wyadom. Turning by the Bull Inn into Witney Street, note a block of houses (R.) including the Bull Tap and the Mason's Arms. At the end of the block is a beautiful Dec. doorway. On the roof is a gable end which was crowned with a graceful and elaborate chimney, now unfortunately taken down. Inside the Bull

## BURFORD—CAVERSFIELD

Tap itself may be traced the remains of what seems to have been an E.E. arcade. A little farther down Witney Street is the "Great House," probably a Caroline building. Note the scallop ornament over the side door.

On the downs between Burford and Shipton 2 miles from the former, in a field some distance right of the road, is the *Gibbet Oak*, on which are the initials H.D., T.D., 1784. The reference is to two highwaymen named Dunn, who were hanged here at that date.

*Cassington* (6 miles N.W. of Oxford) is about a mile N. of the junction of the Evenlode and the Thames. Its tall graceful spire is a conspicuous landmark from the upper river. The interesting church is Norman, about 1150, with some Dec. alterations about 1320. The chancel and aisleless nave are separated by a central tower. Arches and doors, three windows and the font are original Norman. The effect of the tower arches leading into the groined chancel is good. The Dec. additions are the upper part of the tower and the spire, and four windows, one on each face. There are also two Perp. windows. The exterior corbel-table shows the walls are original Norman. Note also: (1) the double piscina (Dec.); (2) the painting on the S. door; (3) the almsdish with figures of Adam and Eve; (4) two brasses dated 1414 and 1590; (5) the Jacobean stalls, which came from the Cathedral.

*Caswell House* is an ancient house originally Tudor, now a farm. It is at Curbridge, about  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles W. of Witney. Very little of the old work remains.

CAVERSFIELD (2 miles N. of Bicester, 14 miles

## OXFORDSHIRE

N.E. of Oxford) has a little church with a complicated history. The saddle-backed tower is Saxon, and has two strange original windows, deeply splayed with irregular openings. The S. doorway is Norman with some indications of Trans. The font and piscina belong to the church built at this time. The nave arcades are also Trans., but much later in the style, since the details of the arches are pure E.E. with good mouldings and the tooth-ornament.<sup>1</sup> A little later the chancel was rebuilt in E.E. style, retaining the Norman piscina. Two chancel windows are original, but there are two insertions, one Dec. and one early Perp. The church has suffered terribly from vandalism. Both of the aisles and the N. arcade had been destroyed, while the S. arcade remained blocked up in the wall. All were rebuilt in 1873, and though the work looks new, the improvement is enormous. There are two good brasses, and an altar-tomb (1487), all to the Langston family, who held the manor here in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. Caversfield House is modern.

*Caversham* ( $\frac{1}{2}$  mile N. of Reading) is pleasantly situated on a chalk bluff above the Thames, but its picturesqueness has been harmed by the extension of its neighbour, Reading. The old stone bridge, on which stood a chapel to the Virgin, has given place to a modern iron structure, and the old priory

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Blomfield, the historian of the Bicester deanery, believes the piers are Norman, but the arches E.E. and coeval with the chancel. But are there authentic instances of piers and arches differing in date? If so, this suggestion might be applied to other churches, e.g., Great Haseley. Mr. Blomfield's theory that Caversfield contained the grave of Carausius, who seized the government of Britain in 288 A.D., has no historical foundation.

## CAVERSHAM—CHADLINGTON

has also disappeared. At Caversham died the great Earl of Pembroke, the wise guardian of Henry III.'s minority. A sharp skirmish occurred on the bridge on 25th April, 1643, when Charles and Prince Rupert made an unsuccessful sally from Oxford to raise the siege of Reading, which town fell to Essex a few days later. The church has suffered terribly from "restoration," in which the Norman arcade and other features were destroyed. The only ancient part remaining is the N. chancel aisle (Perp.), which is separated from the chancel by an arcade of two bays, with panelling on the under side of the arches, and angels carved on the capitals. Between the church and the river is the "rectory," an ecclesiastical-looking building now much restored, and once belonging to Cardinal Wolsey. It has a haunted summer-house on the river, which a ghostly boat is heard to approach at midnight; then follows a heavy splash, then silence. What dark deed is thus re-enacted is unknown.

Caversham Park is fine and spacious, but the house is modern. It replaces a historic house now burnt down, once belonging to the Knollys family (see *Rotherfield Greys*) which Queen Elizabeth and Charles I. have both visited. Charles I. was also confined here as prisoner in July, 1647 (see *Whitchurch*).

*Chadlington* (17 miles N.W. of Oxford, 2½ miles N.W. of Charlbury) lies a little N. of the Evenlode. The church is mainly E.E., the noteworthy parts being the two arcades, and the trefoil-headed double lancets on the S. The S. door is round-headed and may be earlier. The chancel as rebuilt is Dec.; the N. door and some windows Perp.; also the tower, in which some Dec. windows

## OXFORDSHIRE

have been reinserted.<sup>1</sup> Near the road which climbs the hill to Sarsden is *Knoll Bury*, a prehistoric camp. On the hill about  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile N. of the hamlet *Dean* is the *Hawk Stone*, a fine solitary monolith, nearly 8 feet high, standing alone on the bare ridge. These hills command beautiful views over the Evenlode Valley and Wychwood.

CHALGROVE (10 miles S.E. of Oxford,  $4\frac{1}{2}$  N.E. of Watlington Station) is a name well known to all as the scene of the skirmish on 18th June, 1643, in which John Hampden lost his life. The level corn-fields where the fight was fought stretch both sides of the Oxford and Watlington road. The village is  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile S., and hardly visible, for it lies beside a small stream that flows in a shallow valley slightly below the general level. On the main road, somewhat beyond the turn leading to the village, is the *Hampden Monument*, a stone obelisk erected just two centuries after Hampden's death, and not far from the spot where he was fatally wounded. In itself the monument is somewhat insignificant. Its most interesting side bears a medallion portrait and the motto "*Vestigia nulla retrorsum*". On 17th June, 1643, Rupert had left Oxford in quest of a convoy, and, marching all night by Tetworth and Postcombe, fell upon Chinnor about daybreak. He missed the convoy, and was returning with the booty and the prisoners he had captured, when he was assailed by the gathering forces of the enemy, who tried to detain him till Essex, whose headquarters were at Thame, should come up. Rupert sent forward his foot to secure Chiselhampton

<sup>1</sup>This is Parker's explanation. He gives a similar account of Wolvercote tower, and apparently also of Ardley and Epwell.

## CHALGROVE

Bridge, and with his horse faced round and charged the enemy. They resisted bravely, but were outnumbered and soon forced to fly, on which Rupert secured his retreat. "It is not, however, with Rupert that the thoughts of the visitor to Chalgrove Field are mainly concerned. Hampden is the abiding presence there" (Gardiner). He had slept that night at Watlington, but had hurried to the scene of action, and joined as a volunteer the first regiment he met. Early in the fight he was severely wounded in the shoulder,<sup>1</sup> and rode off "with his head drooping, and his hands leaning on his horse's neck". Unable to reach the house of his father-in-law at Pyrton, he turned toward Thame, which he reached after great pain and difficulty. There he lingered six days and then died (see *Thame*).

The village church has two Trans. arcades in the nave, of which the S. arcade is earlier, the N. one later and more nearly resembling E.E. The chancel is entirely late Dec., with a reticulated E. window. It contains beautiful sedilia and piscina (also Dec.), an old square low side window, a partly blocked squint, and some traces of good old frescoes. The nave aisles have each a Dec. window, but otherwise their doors and windows are Perp. There is a piscina at E. end of both aisles. The font is curious Jacobean, the pulpit also Jacobean. There are two good brasses of knights in armour, dated 1441 and 1446. The tower is Perp. Somewhat E. of the church is an old-looking house, partly timber built, and showing good gables and chimneys and plain mullioned windows.

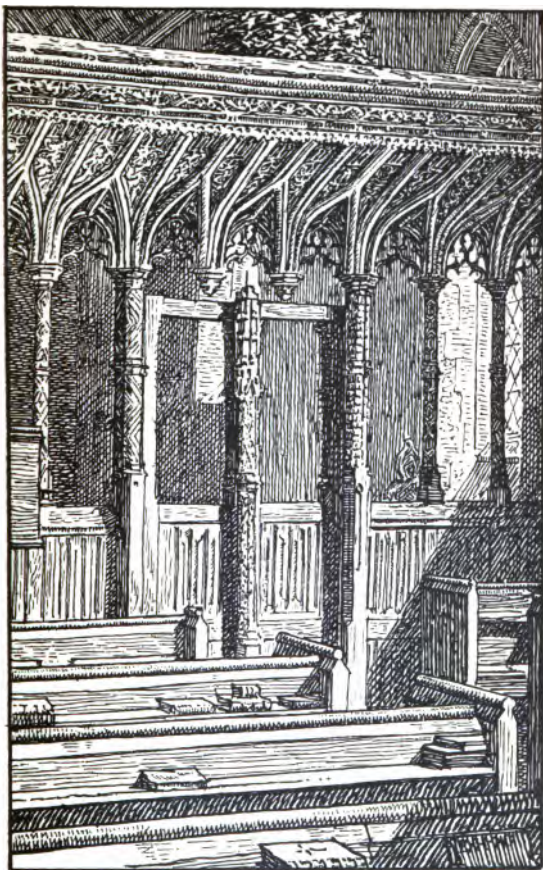
<sup>1</sup> The wound was probably inflicted by a bullet. The story that a pistol burst in his hand seems a later account, but, as Gardiner says, the point is "utterly unimportant".



## OXFORDSHIRE

*Charlbury* (14½ miles N.W. from Oxford; station on G.W.R.) is a small town, pleasantly situated on the Evenlode. A little E. is *Lee Place*, a Jacobean house, built in 1640 by a branch of the Lees of Ditchley. The church has lost nearly all its windows, and shows too much whitewashed wall inside, but has some points of interest. The N. arcade of the nave is Norman, but nearly all other ancient features are E.E. These are: (1) the S. arcade; (2) the arches leading to the chancel aisles, both from the nave aisles and from the chancel itself; (3) the tower with its lofty arch (all but the top storey and the W. door, which are Perp.); (4) the trefoil-headed S. doorway, the door of which is old oak; (5) the piscina in S. chancel aisle, near which is an ancient tombstone; (6) the only two original windows, one a lancet W. of N. aisle, the other a double lancet, above which has been cut a quatrefoil probably of later work (cf. the similar windows at *Langford*). There is also a canopied niche, an old alms-box and a wooden coffer. In the upper part of the town is a drinking-fountain, a memorial of a visit of Queen Victoria in 1886. About ½ mile W. are *Cornbury Park* and *Wychwood* (q.v.).

*Charlton-on-Otmoor* (9½ miles N.E. of Oxford, 3 miles N.E. of Islip Station) is a picturesque little village, huddled round its church tower, and standing on a knoll on the very edge of the flat "moor". The original church was E.E., in which style remain the nave arcades, lower part of tower (the upper is Perp.), S. door and porch, N. clerestory, two piscinæ in nave, and the font. There are no lancet windows, the oldest being a two-light early geometrical window at the E. end of the S. aisle.



**CHARLTON-ON-OTMOOR (ROOD-LOFT)**



## CHARLBURY—CHASTLETON HOUSE

Most of the nave windows are Dec., but two are Perp. The chancel was rebuilt about 1380, and shows the transition from Dec. to Perp. The side windows are still late Dec., but in the E. window the Perp. lines emerge. The piscina, sedilia and Easter sepulchre are all of the same date. The most striking feature in the church is the handsome rood-screen and loft complete, dated about 1500. It shows elaborate carving and is beautifully preserved. Note also the Jacobean pulpit (dated 1616), the Perp. rood niche above the S. door, and the low side window.

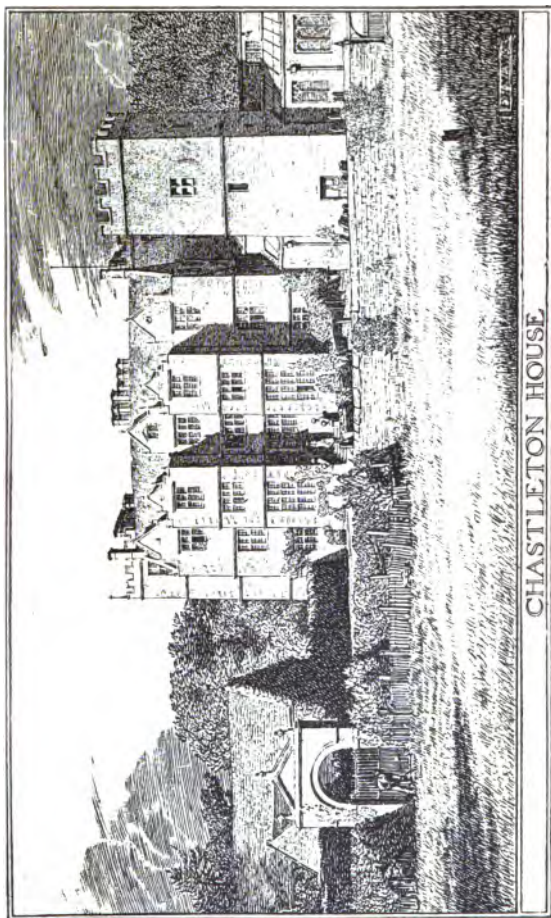
CHASTLETON HOUSE (5 miles N.W. from Chipping Norton) lies in an odd angle of the county, close to the N.W. border. The border line mostly runs along the high ridge on which the Rollright stones stand, but here turns N. to include Chastleton village and house, which lie just on the farther slope, and then runs two miles farther N. to the conspicuously tall but ugly *Four Shire Stone* (close to the road between Chipping Norton and Moreton-in-the-Marsh), where the counties of Warwick, Worcester, Gloucester and Oxford meet.

The grand Elizabethan House, which has not been altered to the present day, was built by Walter Jones (a lineal ancestor of Miss Jones, the present owner), who acquired the manor in 1603. Its previous owner was the notorious Robert Catesby, who sold the estate, not, as it is often alleged, to provide funds for the Gunpowder Plot, but to pay a heavy fine levied on him by Queen Elizabeth for complicity in Essex's rebellion. The chamber called the *Cavalier's Room* was the scene of a marvellous escape of Captain Arthur Jones after Worcester fight. He was hotly pursued by a party of Round-

## OXFORDSHIRE

heads, who thought themselves on the track of Charles II., and his wife had just time to hide him in the secret chamber (still to be seen) to which the Cavalier's room alone gives access. The Roundheads, however, noticing a tired horse in the stables, determined to stop the night, and unfortunately chose the Cavalier's room to stay in. But the brave wife drugged their wine, and the fugitive escaped over their sleeping bodies.

The plan of the house is a quadrangle surrounding a small inner court, the effect of which is damp and depressing. The front is lofty and dignified, with five gables and a square tower at either end. The back is similar in character. The interior is not shown, except by special permission of the tenant. The *hall* has a fine screen, oak panelling, and a long carved dining-table. Opening out of it is a small drawing-room panelled in white. The oldest rooms are in the E. part of the house and reached by a grand oak staircase. On the first floor are: (1) small tapestried bedroom with "Queen Elizabeth's bed," brought from Woodstock; (2) the *state bedroom* with fine carved mantelpiece, plaster ceiling, and an elaborate carved bed; (3) *the old state drawing-room*. This is one of the grandest rooms in the county. It is beautifully panelled, and has a magnificent plaster ceiling with pendent bosses, to be compared with those at Broughton and the Globe Room, Banbury. The carved stone mantelpiece with the family arms above it is also striking. On the floor above is the *Long Gallery*, with an oriel window, and a coved plaster ceiling now under repair (1903). From the leads there is a splendid view over to the hills beyond Moreton-in-the-Marsh. The old box-garden, E. of the



CHASTLETON HOUSE



## CHASTLETON HOUSE—CHECKENDON

house, with shrubs cut into the forms of animals, also shows up well. In the park to the N. is an old dovecot. The dining-room is handsome, but the fittings are modern. A room with a quaint old bed is called "Catesby's room". It has a curious painted window, but whether this represents the Gunpowder Plot conspirators the present writer does not know. The fine kitchen is black with the smoke of centuries which may not be cleaned, and bright with a remarkable service of pewter. Next to it is the buttery hatch. The enormous cellars are supported by massive, dimly-seen columns, which look like the foundations of an older house.

The small church lies E. of the house and is much dwarfed by it. The oldest part is the W. half of the nave, which is Trans. To this style belong a N. door and the two W. bays of the S. arcade. The two E. bays and the chancel arch are E.E. The windows are all later insertions, Dec., Perp., and churchwarden. The N. Chapel is weak Perp. The tower over the S. porch is debased, having been built by Walter Jones, the founder of the house. The font is considered Dec. There are three brasses dated 1592, 1613 and 1676 respectively. Note also the bench-ends and old tiles, Jacobean pulpit, fragments of coloured glass, two old piscinæ, remains of side chapel in S. aisle, and niche for sanctus bell. Bishop Juxon read service in this church every Sunday during the time of the Commonwealth, when to do so was penal.

On the top of Chastleton Hill, about a mile S.E. of the house, is a very fine prehistoric camp, one of the most striking in the county.

CHECKENDON (about 20 miles S.E. of Oxford,



## OXFORDSHIRE

4½ miles N.E. of Goring Station) is a small village lying on high ground in the S. part of the Chilterns, and not far from their W. slope. It contains a very fine though small Norman church, quite unspoiled. The only alterations are the insertion of two Dec. windows in the chancel, three Perp. windows in the nave, and one in the apse, and the addition of Perp. tower, roof, and S. porch. The view of the E. apse is very impressive, with the two fine Norman arches leading into it, and the flight of steps to the altar. The E. window is an imitation of Norman. One of the Dec. windows is prolonged under a transom to be a low side window. Round the apse is a coloured fresco of our Lord and His Apostles, which has been revived. In the porch there is a mutilated stoup. There are five brasses: (1) John Rede, 1404; (2) Walter Beauchamp, 1440, with angels bearing his soul; (3) Anne Bowitt, 1490; (4) inscription only to Cecilia Rede, 1428; (5) inscription only to Edmund Rede, 1435. This is a palimpsest with an effigy on the back, perhaps of St. Margaret. The Redes lived at Checkendon Court, now a modern house, but probably on the site of an old convent.

*Cherwell* (river). (See Introduction, p. 12.)

*Chesterton* (12 miles N.E. of Oxford, 2 miles S.W. of Bicester) is one mile W. of the Oxford and Bicester road. It is on Akeman Street and less than a mile from the Roman town of Alchester, to which it owes its name (see *Bicester*). The church has a Norman font, and Trans. N. arcade. The chancel was originally E.E., of which the good chancel arch and one lancet remain. In 1283 the church was given to the College of Bonhommes in Ashridge (Bucks), who are thought to have rebuilt

## CHERWELL—CHINNOR

it. No part of the structure, however, with the uncertain exception of the S. arcade, answers to this date. The Dec. windows and the tower show flowing tracery and are much later, and the E. window is modern. The clerestory and a few windows are Perp. Note the beautiful early Dec. sedilia, which show the ball-flower, but have been rather spoilt by colouring. Also double piscina with aumbry above, low side window and strange iron canopy to font.

*Chiltern Hills.* (See Introduction, p. 8.)

*Chinnor* (about 17 miles E. of Oxford either by Thame or Aston Rowant; station on G.W.R.) is a pleasant village lying just under the Chilterns, which here run straight for some miles, rising steep from the plain, until they turn at the prominent *Thick Thorn Hill*, a little to the N.E. On their side is cut the *Bledlow Cross*, and about 5 miles to the N.E. the larger *White Leaf Cross* (near Risborough in Bucks), which is a conspicuous landmark for all the surrounding country. The place suffered much in a raid of Prince Rupert's, who fell upon it suddenly at daybreak on 18th June, 1643. The handsome church is almost entirely late Dec., the only exceptions being the nave arcades which in part, at least, are considered Trans., and the clerestory and roof which are Perp. The windows have flowing tracery, the large ones being reticulated. The Dec. tower is saddle-backed, and the S. porch groined. There are four piscinae, some good plain sedilia, square low side window, a good Dec. screen with stairs which led to the rood-loft, and a fine foliated tomb-recess in the S. aisle. Two of the chancel windows are full of beautiful old glass. There is a remarkable number of fine old brasses,

## OXFORDSHIRE

three on the chancel walls, which all commemorate Rectors of Chinnor, and are dated 1330, 1361, 1388; and eight on the floor of the vestry, the earliest of which is 1380 and the latest 1510. There is also a cross-legged effigy at the W. end.

**CHIPPING NORTON** (19 miles N.W. of Oxford) is on a branch railway connected with the Oxford and Worcester line. It is the highest-placed town in the county, lying nearly 700 feet above sea-level, and at the W. edge of the extensive plateau which forms the backbone of Northern Oxfordshire (see Introduction, p. 5). Below it the ground falls away rapidly to the upper part of a well-marked valley, through which a tributary runs to join the Evenlode. Its situation on the bare hillside is bleak and exposed, but its aspect is clean and bright. The name means the North Market Town, Chipping being derived from the Saxon word meaning "to buy," from which also Cheap-side comes. From this it will be readily inferred that it is chiefly important as an agricultural centre. There is, however, also a large factory for woollen cloths, a brewery, and a trade in leather gloves. In contrast with Banbury it may well be said that blessed is the town that has no history. A market granted by King John, a charter by James I., and members sent to Edward I.'s parliament, comprise all that is of importance in its quiet annals. The town consists chiefly of one long fine street, running nearly N. and S., and with the new Town Hall in the centre of the broad part.

The church stands high in the first rank of Oxfordshire churches. Its present aspect is mainly Perp., with some Dec. parts. There remain, however, a few E.E. features belonging to an

## CHIPPING NORTON

earlier church, *i.e.*, (1) the lower part of the tower which contains a lancet window, and shows internally traces of an E.E. arch and the capitals from which it sprang. The rest of the tower was rebuilt in 1825, and is without interest. (2) The two arches and the bell-necked pillar, which divide the chancel from the N. chapel. (3) The E. respond of the arcade separating the two N. aisles. (This can scarcely be in its original place.) What the former church was like can hardly be conjectured, for the chancel and the S. aisle of nave have been altered to Dec., and the nave, N. aisle and S.W. porch to late Perp. Very late in the Perp. period a second N. aisle was built, into which two windows now look at the E. end, which were formerly exterior, one of them being a Dec. window.

The building is entered by the S.W. porch which is very beautiful Perp., hexagonal in form, and vaulted, with a parvise above, containing three two-light windows, and reached by a turret with a bell-niche. It leads to a fine Dec. door which shows the ball-flower. In the S. aisle (Dec.) the main feature is the six-light E. window. This is one of the most beautiful Dec. windows in the county and should be studied from outside. The details are in the main geometrical, but the introduction of the ogee arch shows that the window belongs in date to the commencement of the curvilinear period (about 1320). Under the window is set the old altar stone with five crosses, and near it is a piscina and an odd-shaped recess in the wall. The chancel has Dec. windows with later flowing patterns, showing the approach of the Perp. period, but they are much inferior to the window just described. The sedilia and piscina (Perp.) have

## OXFORDSHIRE

been much restored. Between the chancel and the N. aisle, which reaches as far E. as the chancel, there is a good low parclose screen of stone (Dec.). There is also a squint on this side with elaborate tracery. The nave contains highly-finished and somewhat peculiar Perp. work. The large square clerestory windows almost form one continuous window, being divided only by the nave pillars, which are prolonged right up to the roof. All the rest of the walls is beautifully panelled, forming one continuous pattern. Over the chancel arch is a large window of similar character with an elaborate curtain arch. Just N. of the chancel arch and behind the pulpit are three canopied niches which formed the *eredos* to a chantry chapel, no longer existing. In the adjacent wall are the rood-stairs, in good preservation. The N. aisle contains at the W. end the monument of Thomas Rickardes and his wife, 1579, and at the E. end the splendid altar-tomb of Richard Croft and his wife, 1502, with alabaster effigies. In the exterior N. aisle, which is of poor work, there is a huge tablet, with the names of all the Dawkins family buried in the vault below. Here also are the *brasses*. They were all torn from their matrices in some "restoration," and taken from the church. They have now, as far as possible, been replaced, and are set against the N. wall. In order from W. to E. they are: (1) two small figures with *detached* inscriptions to John Stokes and his wife, *circa* 1450; (2) John Younge and his wife Isabelle, 1451; (3) small male effigy (perhaps Thomas Green), 1465; (4) small female figure, Agnes, wife of William Tanner, 1503; (5) Elizabeth, wife of Richard Tante, 1530; (6) John Purgett and his wife, 1484

## CHIPPING NORTON—CHISELHAMPTON

(replaced in its matrix); (7) Margaret, wife of John Ashfield, 1507, with black letter inscription; (8) black letter inscription to Annie Benet and her three husbands, 1531.

During the Commonwealth Bishop Juxon was hunting in the neighbourhood, when the hare, with hounds following, ran through Chipping Norton churchyard. Complaint of the bishop's "sacrilege" was made to Cromwell, who only said, "Do you think the bishop prevailed on the hare to run through the churchyard?"

Other objects of interest are few. E. of the church are several large mounds and trenches, showing the site of a castle erected in Stephen's reign, of which not one stone remains. In the street leading to the church is a picturesque row of almshouses, with the date 1640. In a private garden behind the British schools is the site of a vanished monastery. A rope-shop on the E. of Market Square has a vaulted cellar of two bays. Nearly opposite on the W. side is the old guildhall, which has a Perp. doorway and windows.

*Over Norton* is a hamlet, 1 mile N., which no longer has a church. At a hamlet, 1 mile N.E., no longer called *Cold Norton*, is *Chapel House*, now a private dwelling, but formerly a priory, founded in the twelfth century, and then, after the Reformation, a noted coaching inn. No traces of the priory exist, but at the Priory Farm ( $\frac{1}{2}$  mile E.) there are some fishponds and earthworks.

*Chiselhampton* ( $6\frac{1}{2}$  miles S.E. of Oxford) is close to a long ancient bridge over the Thame, crossed by Prince Rupert the day before Chalgrove Field, and by which he secured his retreat after his victory (see *Chalgrove*). The church was built in 1763.

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*Churchill* (21 miles N.W. of Oxford, 3 miles S.W. of Chipping Norton Station) is famed as the birthplace of Warren Hastings (on Dec. 6, 1732). The story of his lying on the banks of a stream and resolving to repurchase the family estate of Daylesford must be located on the Evenlode at Daylesford itself, where he was brought up by his grandfather after his father's death. Daylesford is in Worcestershire, but its woods are in clear view from Churchill, hardly more than 2 miles distant N.W. Half-way down the hill in the same direction is an old church, of which the chancel alone survives, and is used as a cemetery chapel. It has a good E.E. door, but has lost its windows. The graveyard has some fine trees, and is entered by a gateway with a four-centred arch. The village itself is on the hill, and is clean and well built. It contains a memorial drinking-fountain, and also a monument to William Smith, "father of British geology," who was born here in 1769. The new church was built in 1826, and is a curious imitation of Oxford buildings. The tower is Magdalen Tower in little, the roof is that of Christ Church Hall, and the side windows and buttresses recall New College.

*Clanfield* (about 17 miles W. of Oxford, 1½ miles S. of Alvescot Station) was the seat of Ellangowan nunnery, of which the fishponds and one Dec. window alone remain. The church was dedicated to St. Stephen, and on the Dec. tower is a curious figure of the saint with a Bible in one hand and a pile of stones in the other. The original church was Trans., of which the N. arcade, the chancel arch, the S. door, and one small window remain. The chancel with its aisle is now E.E.,



CLIFTON HAMPDEN





## CHURCHILL—CLIFTON HAMPDEN

but many Dec. windows (mostly geometrical) have been inserted, both in chancel and nave. The E. window has interior foliation, and one window, S. of chancel, has its spandrels ornamented on the outside but not pierced. The restored font is Perp. Note also : (1) the large squint ; (2) the window-sill used as sedilia ; (3) the E.E. niche on either side of the chancel arch.

*Clattercot* (6 miles N. of Banbury, 28 N. of Oxford) is a parish with one house, now a farm, but formerly a Gilbertine priory dedicated to St. Leonard. The E. part of the building has some old features, chief of which is a passage descending through an arched opening into a chamber with groined vaulting, W. of which is a series of fine cellars, and E. a room with pointed arches blocked up in the walls. There is also a square-headed doorway, a gable with a moulded arch below it, a dove-cot and a four-centred gateway. The old fishpond is now used as a reservoir for the canal, and is much haunted by waterfowl.

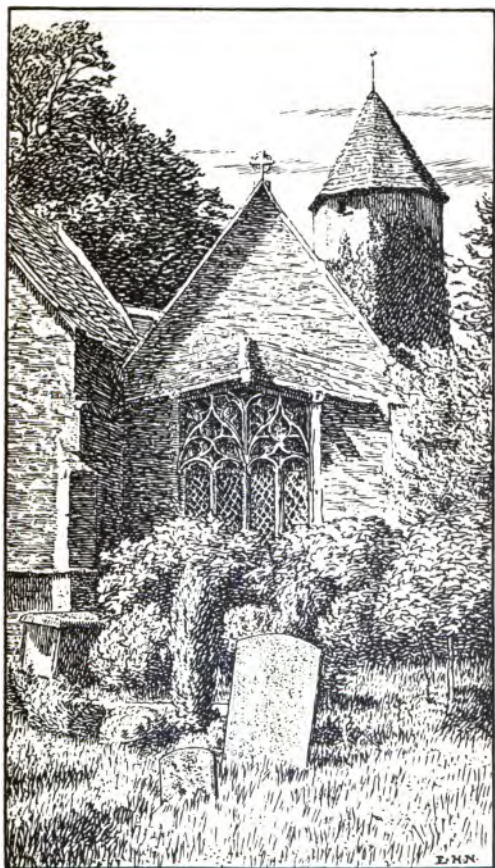
*Claydon* (6½ miles N. of Banbury, 28½ miles N. of Oxford) is the most N. village in the county. The *Three Shire Stone*, where Warwickshire, Northamptonshire and Oxfordshire meet, is ½ mile farther N. The quaint little church (Norman and E.E.) has been over-restored. The Norman arcade with its low pillars is effective. The narrow N. aisle widens at the E. end into an E.E. chapel, lighted by lancets, and with a squint between it and the chancel. The chancel ornaments and most of the windows are modern. There is an odd little saddle-backed tower.

*Clifton Hampden* (8 miles S. of Oxford, 1 mile E. of Culham Station) is on the Thames, which is

## OXFORDSHIRE

here crossed by a good brick bridge of six arches. The church (Trans. with Dec. additions) is beautifully placed among trees on a low cliff above the river. It was carefully restored in 1844, in memory of G. H. Gibbs, whose altar-tomb is in the chancel. The nave has a Trans. arcade S., and a Dec. arcade N. In the S. aisle is a Trans. piscina. Two small windows may be Trans., the rest are Dec. (restored). At the W. end are two foliated lancets divided by a buttress, on which a small spire has now been built.

COCOS (11 miles W. of Oxford) is really a suburb of Witney. The church, manor-house and vicarage form a striking group of old buildings beside the Windrush. At the Conquest the manor belonged to Odo, Bishop of Bayeux. After his fall, it passed to a baron named De Arsic, who gave the church to the monks of Fécamp. The property conferred on the monks was confiscated in 1415, and soon given to Eton College. The manor has been owned by several families, and is now in the possession of the Harcourts. The church, originally Trans., was much altered very late in the Dec. period, and some Perp. windows were subsequently inserted, chiefly on the S. side. The Trans. parts are the S. arcade, S. door and porch, and possibly the font. The influence of the French monks has given many peculiarities to the Dec. work, *i.e.*, the width of the chancel, the strangeness of the tracery, and the quaint tower, square below and octagonal above, which is set diagonally at the N.W. corner. Especially strange is the N. chantry chapel, which shows decidedly the approach of the Perp. style (in fact nearly all the Dec. work may be described as Trans. to Perp.). The windows oddly combine



COGGS CHURCH



## COGGS—COOMBE

straight lines and flamboyant twistings. One window has been blocked to form a tomb to William Blake, d. 1695, but the ball-flower which surmounted it is still visible. Round the chapel runs an interior cornice of grotesque animals. The rich Dec. tomb under the archway with the female effigy is thought to be one of the Greys of Rotherfield, who held the manor for some years. The vicarage (N. of church) was formerly the monks' residence, and has some old parts remaining, including an E.E. window. The manor-house is S.E. and has two good E.E. windows.

*Cokethorpe Park* (2½ miles S.E. of Witney Station, 11 miles W. of Oxford by Bablockhythe and Stanton Harcourt) contains a mansion built by Sir Simon Harcourt in the Queen Anne style. It now belongs to the Cottrell-Dormer family. Among the pictures is the celebrated painting of Sir Thomas More and his family by Holbein, and a portrait of Angelica Kauffmann by herself. The carved oak wainscot in the dining-room was the gift of Queen Anne. Near the park gates is the little church which, so far as it is old, is Perp. It contains a fine Norman font with intersecting arches on it, and in the porch are three chained books, and the warning, "Do not abuse the books".

*Cold Norton.* (See Chipping Norton.)

*Coombe* (11 miles N.W. of Oxford, 2 miles N.W. of Handborough Station) is rather difficult to reach from Oxford, since it lies on the wrong side of Blenheim Park. It is, however, worth reaching, for it is one of the prettiest of Oxfordshire villages. It stands on high ground, overlooking the Evenlode Valley, and well shaded with trees, while the houses are set round a fair green. In 1395 the church was given to the monks of Eynsham, who at once built

## OXFORDSHIRE.

a new church on higher ground. This is the existing church, which is thus entirely Early Perp., but for a beautiful Dec. niche belonging to the older church, which was built in. The details are first-rate. Inside, note the fine stone pulpit, the rood-stairs, sedilia and piscina, two old tombs, and the remains of old glass. Outside, note the quatrefoil parapet, the sanctus bell niche, and the N. porch with its arched roof. The old font has been desecrated and is in a private garden. W. of the church is the rectory, a fifteenth century building, but no longer the clergyman's residence.

CORNBURY PARK ( $\frac{1}{2}$  mile from Charlbury ; open to visitors on Thursday ; bicycles not allowed and house not shown) is both by its picturesque surroundings and romantic associations one of the most interesting places in the county. Here died the famous Earl of Leicester, poisoned, according to the story, by his second wife Lettice, though this is improbable, since he was at the time sick of a surfeit, and a post-mortem examination revealed no trace of poison. According to local tradition, Amy Robsart's ghost had appeared to him ten days before, while he was riding at dusk through Broad Light, the main avenue of the park, and told him that "in ten days he'd be with her". The wonderful thing is that the tradition knows nothing of names and dates, but is only a story of "a wicked nobleman and her as he ought to have married, but some say he'd murdered". Moreover the ghost was believed still to walk and to be a message of death to those unlucky enough to meet it.<sup>1</sup> In the

<sup>1</sup>For this most remarkable story, see *Three Centuries of North Oxfordshire*, by Mrs. Sturge-Henderson. The same work is drawn upon for other incidents in this paragraph.

## CORNBURY PARK—WYCHWOOD

next century the famous Lord Clarendon obtained the estate, and had the inscription *Deus nobis haec otia fecit* set on the S. of the house at the time of the Restoration. In 1681 Charles II. was entertained in the house by the son, also Lord Clarendon, the father having died in exile. In the eighteenth century Lord Cornbury, eldest son of the last Earl of Clarendon, made the house a centre of Jacobite intrigue. There is a tradition that a party of the Young Pretender's followers, when he turned back from Derby, were concealed in the house, before dispersing westward to their homes. Later on it is believed that Charles Edward himself visited Cornbury in disguise, and was recognised by a barber who shaved him. Soon after this the estate was sold to the Duke of Marlborough, in whose family it remained till quite recently.

Of Lord Leicester's house little or nothing remains, since it was rebuilt in the seventeenth century by Henry, Lord Danvers (Earl of Danby), who died here in 1643, and afterwards altered by Lord Clarendon. It is an effective and picturesque building. The S. and W. fronts are classical in style, and suggest the latter half of the seventeenth century; the gabled buildings to the N. are earlier. The surrounding park is extremely beautiful. To the N.W. and the S.W. are fine avenues—to the N.W. an unrivalled beech avenue; to the S.W. Broad Light, stretching far into the heart of Wychwood. To the S.E. is open park with magnificent trees close at hand, and browsing deer, till in this direction too the trees of Wychwood bound the scene.

WYCHWOOD was formerly a celebrated royal forest, in which most of the kings of England have



## OXFORDSHIRE

hunted, extending nearly over the whole plateau lying between the valleys of the Evenlode and the Windrush. For convenience of the hunting a royal lodge was built at Langley (*q.v.*). In the glades of the forest, according to one version of the story, occurred the first meeting between Edward IV. and Elizabeth Woodville, afterwards his queen. The romantic beauty of this great forest is celebrated, and all will remember Matthew Arnold's Scholar-Gipsy with his

heap of flowers  
Plucked in shy fields, and distant Wychwood bowers.

But in 1862 utilitarian considerations prevailed, and the forest was broken up into lots and sold. Of a great part only isolated copses are left. The one large continuous part which remains lies between Leafield and Charlbury, and forms part of the Cornbury Park estate, which it thus bounds with an upland country of beautiful woods. Most of this is kept private in the interests of pheasant-breeding, but on Thursdays the visitor can walk S. across the park to "the lakes," a series of beautiful ponds formed by damming up a small stream, and set in steep banks of hanging woods. A fair idea of Wychwood may be got by taking a cycle-ride from Charlbury, and turning left in about a mile into a road which, passing by the ranger's lodge, skirts the forest nearly the whole way to Leafield. At Leafield turn E. in the direction of Finstock and Fawler, and the other side of the forest will not be far off on the left. The views are lovely the whole way. (See also *Langley* and *Leafield*.)

*Cornwell* (3 miles W. of Chipping Norton) nestles delightfully in a woodedcombe. *Cornwell*

## CORNWELL—COWLEY

*House* is Jacobean, but has been a good deal modernised. The little Norman or Trans. church is in the park. There is a good Norman font, two plain Norman doors, and a Trans. chancel arch. The chancel and all the windows are Perp.

*Cote.* (See Bampton Aston.)

*Cottisford* (about 6½ miles N. of Bicester) is a secluded village lying about a mile E. of the Oxford and Brackley road. The manor was in Norman times given to the Abbey of Bec, but was confiscated by Henry V. when other priories were suppressed, and presently given by Henry VI. to Eton. The church, originally E.E., is restored and of slight interest. Note the stairs to the rood-loft, a stone coffin in a recess of N. chancel wall, and a brass to a knight, his lady and thirteen children. In the village is the ancient house of the Cotesfords, who, though not lords of the manor,<sup>1</sup> have given their name to the place. The oldest-looking part of the building is the N. side facing the road. It has a row of three one-light square-headed windows, one of which lights a small room with a curious stone drain. Above them is a still older two-light window, which must be Trans. The windows on the W. side are also old, but have apparently been recently rebuilt.

*Cowley* (2½ miles S.E. of Oxford) is the common name of two detached villages, Temple Cowley and Church Cowley. The name is also loosely applied to the large suburb of Oxford which has sprung up along the Cowley Road, but which is separated from Cowley proper by the flat Cowley Marsh. Just on the nearer edge of the marsh, to the left of

<sup>1</sup> For their exact position, see Mr. Blomfield's history of the parish.

## OXFORDSHIRE

the road after the houses stop, is the desecrated chapel of *St. Bartholomew's Hospital*. It is a beautiful little building, with windows showing clearly the transition from Dec. to Perp. Inside are a ruined screen dated 1651, and two slabs of grave-stones. The hospital was an old foundation of Henry I.'s for lepers, which was granted to Oriel College by Edward III. in 1328. The college presently rebuilt the chapel, and in 1649 rebuilt also the hospital house, now used as a farm building. *Cowley Church* is best reached from the Ifley Road. Its style is decidedly mixed. The N. and S. doors are plain Norman, the chancel arch Trans., the E. window E.E. It seems that the whole of the chancel, with its curious square windows, low side window and aumbries, and triangular piscina, is E.E. as well. Two Dec. windows have been inserted S. of the nave. The low Perp. tower is not as high as the roof of the nave. The N. arcade and aisle are modern. The font is probably E.E.

*Crawley* is a hamlet  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles N.W. of Witney, where the Evenlode is crossed by a three-arched bridge.

**CROPREDY** (3 miles N. of Banbury, 25 miles N. of Oxford ; station on G.W.R.) is a small village on the infant Cherwell, here crossed by Cropredy Bridge, which on 29th June, 1644, was the scene of one of the most stubborn fights in the Civil War. The Cherwell Valley at this point runs from N. to S., and has a flat bottom of rather more than  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile broad, on either side of which the hills rise up about 150 feet. The village lies on the W. of the valley, and the river runs close under it, so that there is a considerable stretch of flat meadow land on the far or E. side, which was

## CRAWLEY—CROPREDY

the scene of the principal fighting. The bridge is now entirely modern, having been rebuilt in 1780. The sluggish Cherwell is here quite a small stream, which expands into a deep pool below the bridge, but above it does not appear a formidable obstacle. During 28th June the armies of Waller and King Charles were manœuvring about Banbury, where Waller, by being the first to occupy Crouch Hill, gained the superior position. On this Charles marched away N. and induced Waller to follow him, Charles keeping on the E. bank of the Cherwell, and Waller on the W. bank. On reaching Cropredy Waller seized the bridge and watched his enemy marching past on the far side. Suddenly Charles's front division quickened their steps, hoping to surprise a party of Roundhead cavalry which they heard was in front. The result was to leave a gap between the front and rear divisions, and thus give an opportunity which Waller at once took. Crossing himself by the bridge, and sending another company across a ford about a mile down the river, he attacked the rear division on both sides and nearly forced it to surrender. But the front division hastened back to the rescue, and their furious charges turned the fortune of the day, so that Waller, with the loss of his artillery, was driven back to the bridge. Here he maintained his ground until the Cavaliers crossed by the ford, when he withdrew to a strong position on the high ground above the village. Although the Royalist soldiers had shown themselves superior, Charles hesitated to renew the attack, and so lost the fruits of his victory.

Considering the size of the village, the church is unusually spacious and imposing. The nave aisles overlap the chancel considerably, thus forming side

## OXFORDSHIRE

chapels, which are enclosed by old screens, one of which is Dec., the other Perp. The general impression the church makes is of a Dec. building in the curvilinear style. At this period it was wholly rebuilt, with the (possible) exception of the nave aisles. Chancel, nave arcades, clerestory and lower part of the tower are all in this style. The lofty columns in the nave have mouldings continued to the ground without capitals on the pillars. The tower and chancel arches are similar. This feature, which is elsewhere heavy (*e.g.* at *Kidlington*), is here productive of grace and dignity, and makes the vista from the W. end down to the large reticulated E. window very impressive. The only earlier work is in the S. aisle, which contains two geometrical windows with good tracery. The S. door and the ball-flower cornice may also belong to the earlier Dec. period. In the S. aisle there are also two good later inserted windows, showing the transition to Perp. Both the side chapels are now Perp., and the whole of the N. aisle. The top storey of the tower is debased Perp. N. of the church is a Dec. vestry with a priest's chamber above, lighted by two windows, one of which now opens into the church. There is a fine double piscina (Dec.), an ancient eagle-shaped brass lectern, a Jacobean pulpit, an ancient chest (perhaps E.E.), and traces of a "Doom" fresco above the chancel arch. Two suits of armour hung up in the N. aisle recall the Civil War. Other memorials are kept at the rectory, and at Williamscoth House, on the far side of the bridge.

*Crowell* (16½ miles S.E. of Oxford) is a little village under the Chilterns, between Aston Rowant and Chinnor Stations. The little church is Dec.,

## CROWELL—CUDDSDON

but retains a Norman N. door and a Trans. font. Note the square stoup, square-headed sedilia, blocked low side window, and brass dated 1469, with an English rhyming inscription.

*Crowmarsh Gifford* ( $\frac{1}{2}$  mile E. of Wallingford) has a charming little Norman church, plain and early in the style. The exterior of the nave is unspoiled, and the W. end remarkably good; the chancel has been restored, but retains a good Norman piscina. In the old W. door which has now been moved to the N. transept can be seen the marks of cannon-balls fired from Wallingford Castle in 1646. The interior has been spoilt by modern painting.

**CUDDSDON** ( $7\frac{1}{2}$  miles S.E. of Oxford,  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles S. of Wheatley Station) is a village pleasantly situated at the end of a horseshoe plateau stretching to Garsington, from which the distant views of the Chilterns are fine. The river Thame runs in the valley immediately below. The village has long been the residence of the Bishops of Oxford. Bishop Bancroft removed here from Oxford in 1635, and built a palace, which was intentionally burnt down nine years later to prevent the Roundheads from using it as a garrison. The manor-house shared the same fate. In 1679 Bishop Fell built the present palace, which is of venerable grey stone, but of little interest architecturally. The chapel was built in 1846 by Bishop Wilberforce, who in 1853 founded the well-known Theological Training College, the effective buildings of which were designed by Street. The fine church, which doubtless attracted Bishop Bancroft, formerly belonged to the Abbey of Abingdon. Originally it was a Trans. church, built about 1180, cruciform with central tower and no aisles. Of this there

## OXFORDSHIRE

remain: (1) the central piers and arches; (2) the W. door and buttresses; (3) the S. door (both doors are very good); (4) the walls of the N. transept, showing a small Norman window and part of corbel-table; (5) the stair-turret at N.W. angle of tower; (6) traces of the original corbel-table and windows in the nave. About 1240 the nave walls were broken through to form E.E. aisles, of which there remain the arcades (restored), two long lancets at the W. end, and three smaller ones close together in the S. aisle. Above them was afterwards set a geometrical window. At this time the aisles were raised, and later Dec. windows inserted, only one of which remains unrestored. The W. window is singular, Trans. to Perp., geometrical in tracery, but with a transom. The clerestory and a few windows are early Perp. Later (about 1500) the chancel was rebuilt. The side windows are set within arches which were apparently intended to lead into aisles. They contain the arms of the Bishops of Oxford. The upper part of the tower is debased seventeenth century work. There is an old oak pulpit and some poppy-heads. The font may be Trans. There is a singular low side window in the E. part of the N. aisle.

(The above account is substantially that of E. A. Freeman. It may be added that there are blocked round arches in the transepts on either side of the chancel arch, which suggest the possibility that there were chancel aisles existing from an earlier time, and afterwards destroyed. Also all authorities follow Freeman in giving 1500 as the date of the W. porch. It looks, however, far more like 1200. Could there possibly be a verbal slip in the historian's notes?)

*Culham* (7½ miles S. of Oxford, *via* Abingdon;

## CUDDESDON—DEDDINGTON

station on G.W.R.) is a pretty village situated in a bend of the Thames, on which there are a lock and a bridge. On 11th January, 1645, there was a skirmish here, in which the Royalist commander, Sir Henry Gage, was killed while attempting to break down the bridge. The church has been rebuilt except the 1710 tower, which might as well have been included. It contains a monument to Edward Cary, 1637. The window filled with heraldic glass is part of the monument.

*Cuxham* (12 miles S.E. of Oxford) is a pretty village on the Oxford and Watlington road, 1½ miles before reaching Watlington. The church was rebuilt of old materials early in the eighteenth century. There is a Norman W. door, and the lower part of the tower shows some Norman work. There are two Perp. windows N. of the nave, and a brand-new chancel, also a plain Norman font, an hour-glass stand and a brass dated 1506.

DEDDINGTON (16 miles N. of Oxford, 6 miles S. of Banbury, 2 miles W. of Aynho Station) is a place which has seen better days. It was, as its name implies, a Saxon settlement, the town of the *Daedings*. Its position on high ground between the valleys of the Swere and the Worton Brook, soon marked it out as an important defensible post, and a castle was built, of which the foundations and extent are indicated by the circle of huge grass ramparts on the E. of the town. In this castle Piers Gaveston, the favourite of Edward II., was seized by the Earl of Warwick, the "black dog" as Gaveston had nicknamed him. He had surrendered to "Joseph the Jew," the Earl of Pembroke (see *Bampton*), who had promised to spare his life; but the "black dog" swore that he



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had made no promise, and carried off the unfortunate Gaveston to Warwick, where he was beheaded on Blacklow Hill. By this time Deddington was of importance, and had sent members to the Model Parliament. Its two best-known sons were Sir Thomas Pope, founder of Trinity College, Oxford, and the notorious Justice Scroggs. In 1643, Charles I. demanded the church bells, which, as the tower had recently fallen, were, as he explained, of no use to the town; so they were carried into Oxford and made into guns.

The town looks very pretty from the opposite side of the valley, clustering on its hillside, round the tall, far-seen tower. On a nearer inspection it shows few traces of its ancient importance. Only three or four houses look old, among which the Exhibition Inn shows a quaint doorway, and the Plough Inn a cellar with Dec. vaulting. The chief old house is the *Castle Farm*, a sixteenth century building just N. of the church. It is a curious castle-like pile, with the top flat and balustraded, and with large mullioned windows, which on the E. side form shallow oriels. It is kept strictly private. The *church* is large and dignified, but though it contains many points of interest, it has little beauty as a whole. Originally E.E., it was rebuilt early in the Dec. period, the only E.E. parts which were retained being the N. and S. doors, and the pretty piscina E. of the N. aisle. The Dec. nave arcades are impressive rather than beautiful, and the windows are mostly restored and of little interest. They are of three varieties—those N. and S. of the chancel being a plain and early type of two-light window, while the E. windows and the most easterly window of three facing N. in the N.

## DEDDINGTON

aisle are good geometrical. The latter is really the only pretty window in the church. Finally, five windows in the nave are simple intersecting, the remaining nave windows being Perp. insertions. There is a Perp. clerestory not only to the nave but to the chancel also, an unusual feature, and a Perp. window above the chancel arch. The tower is debased, having been rebuilt after its fall in 1635, but it retains figures of St. Peter and St. Paul from the ancient tower. The font dates from the same time (1663). There are raised platforms for chapels at the end of both aisles, connected with each of which is a rood-staircase open to the church. In the S. aisle wall there are also a Dec. piscina, an arched recess with female effigy, and the remains of a staircase leading to a vanished parvise. Near the E. end of the N. aisle there is an E.E. piscina, a large brass with a demi-effigy, but no inscription, and an altar-tomb which had brasses above it, all of which have vanished, except a fragment reading "soule of William Byllyng, merchant of the Staple at Calais, 1533". The chancel has a good restored rood-screen (Perp.), very beautiful early Dec. sedilia and piscina, showing natural foliage, and a very curious low side window in a deep recess under a broken arch, and with a stone seat beneath. Outside there is a small vaulted crypt under the S. aisle, and a Perp. porch to the N. door with fan-tracery vaulting.

Deddington and its neighbours are thus described in a libellous local rhyme :—

Aynho on the hill,  
Clifton in the clay,  
Drunken Deddington,  
And Hempton highway.

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The four places would be passed in the above order by a traveller from E. to W. Aynho is in Northamptonshire ; Clifton is a hamlet on low ground by the Cherwell. Hempton is on the Deddington ridge, farther W. It has a small modern chapel which contains a good Norman font, brought from Over Worton.

DITCHLEY (13 miles N.W. of Oxford, 3 miles N.E. of Charlbury Station) is the seat of Lord Dillon. The name Lee-Dillon records the union of two illustrious families in 1744, when the eleventh Viscount Dillon married the heiress of the Lees of Ditchley. Of the latter family the most celebrated member is Sir Henry Lee, Knight, who was ranger of Woodstock under Elizabeth for many years, and died in 1610. He was succeeded by a line of baronets, all bearing more or less the same name, between whom and the original Sir Henry much confusion has arisen. This is largely due to Sir Walter Scott, who in *Woodstock* has introduced the old knight as a character, forty years after his real death. The Sir Henry Lee really living at that time is described as "a young man of puritanical tendencies," while Scott's Sir Henry is given the age, character and office of the old knight, and accompanied by his hound Bevis. The story of Bevis, which is *not* told by Scott, is that he was not a favourite until one night he entered his master's bedroom and refused to be turned out. In the dark he pinned an intruder, who proved to be Sir Henry's valet, and confessed intentions of robbery and murder. The fifth baronet, Sir Edward Henry Lee, married Charlotte Fitzroy, illegitimate daughter of Charles II., and was created Earl of Litchfield. This title died

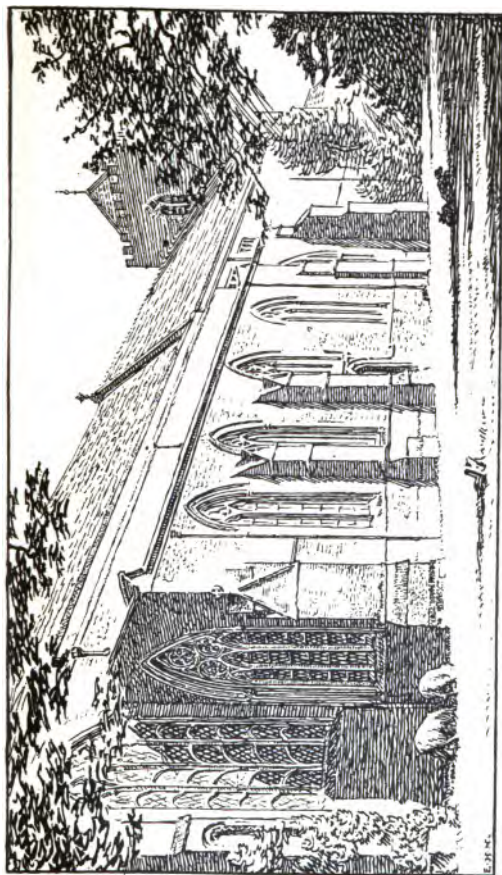
## DITCHLEY

with the fourth earl in 1776. (See *Spelsbury*, where the Lees and Dillons are buried.)

The estate was purchased by the first Sir Henry, who built here a house in which he entertained Queen Elizabeth in 1592. (Another account, however, states that this was at Quarendon, Bucks.) James I. was a frequent guest here, and enjoyed the hunting. Round the hall there still exist 'stage' heads, with rhyming couplets beneath describing the "good hunting" of this monarch. Charles II. also often came here to see his favourite daughter. Unfortunately this house was entirely destroyed in 1722, and the present heavy mansion built by Gibbs, the architect of the Radcliffe Camera, Oxford. The statues at the top represent Fame and Loyalty, though why the latter should be in Roman costume is not clearer than in the case of the painting of Allegory in *Bleak House*. One room is hung in Genoese cut velvet. The family pictures are of the highest interest. There are three portraits of the first Sir Henry Lee, one of which, by Sir Anthonis Mor in 1568, was long mistaken for Sir Francis Drake, because of the armillary spheres on the sleeves. Another is a three-quarter length with Bevis, and a third was taken in his old age. There are also portraits of his brothers, Sir Richard Lee and Cromwell Lee, Archbishop Warham, Queen Elizabeth standing on a map of England, Henry Prince of Wales (eldest son of James I.), Charles I. as a boy, Charles II., the Duchess of Cleveland, and a group by Lely consisting of James II. when Duke of York, Anne Hyde, and the Princesses Mary and Anne. A casket presented by Charles II. to his daughter Charlotte is also preserved.

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is modern and there are no remains. The church is at the S. end of the town, close to the picturesque bridge over the Thame. Entering the churchyard by the lych-gate, we first pass by the school-house (W. of the church), which contains the only existing remains of the *priory buildings*. To the N. it shows a fine timber-built front, but to the S. there are the heads of two Perp. windows and a door built up in the wall. Passing to the S. door of the church, we notice at once one of its most striking features, the long row of eight Dec. windows, all with similar intersecting tracery. The entrance is through the Perp. wooden porch, the latest pre-Reformation part of the church. Near it is a good churchyard cross, well restored. Though the church is the most striking one in Oxfordshire, the first view of the interior is disappointing, the most prominent objects being the long blank wall of the nave and the strange wall which entirely cuts off the S. chancel aisle from the S. nave aisle. On advancing into the chancel the sight of the beautiful arcades and the remarkable E. window partly remove this impression, but wonder remains at the curious nature of the ground-plan, which caused Freeman to say that "to grace of outline and justness of proportion the church can lay no claim whatever". The history of this singular pile has been keenly debated among archæologists, but the main facts are pretty certainly established. Speaking broadly, the church was originally a Trans. building, which has been enlarged to its present size by accretions of different dates, but all falling within the Dec. period. Of the original Trans. church there now remain the nave and the W. end of the choir. The lower part of the nave walls may



DORCHESTER ABBEY



## DORCHESTER

perhaps be early Norman, or even belong to the ancient Cathedral, but no pure Norman features remain. The date of the nave as a whole must be the same as that of the chancel arch, *i.e.*, about 1180, for its side-columns are banded by a string-course, which is continued along the whole N. side of the nave, and prolonged some way into the chancel, marking the point to which the original chancel must at least have reached. The string-course can be traced on the S. side too, though interrupted by the Dec. arches. Below it on the N. side there are no windows, since the cloisters abutted on its outside, but above it there were three long lancets, one of which has been opened. One lancet can also be traced on the S. side, W. of the Dec. arcade. It is a very disputed question whether the original church had transepts. The present round arches facing N. and S. can hardly be original. They are not of the style of 1180, and they cut through the string-course of that date. It is most probable that they are seventeenth century. The Trans. church probably had transepts, but they were approached by smaller arches than the present. On the outside W. wall of the present N. transept is a fine Norman door which is good evidence of this.

The Dec. additions which were to transform the church consist of chapels, and aisles which were mainly built to contain chapels. First was erected the beautiful N. aisle, in the early geometrical style of 1280. The tracery of the windows recalls the work in Merton Chapel, Oxford, which is of the same date. There is a lingering trace of E.E. in the dog-tooth moulding of their side-capitals, also in those of some vaulting-shafts erected to bear a



## OXFORDSHIRE

roof which was never completed. The arch leading from the N. transept into the aisle is still more decidedly E.E., though Freeman believes it of the same date as the rest. N. of the W. bay of the aisle there stood a chapel of the same date, but this, together with the N. bay of the transept, was destroyed in the seventeenth century. At the end of the transept was placed at that date a hideous window, pieced of ancient fragments, but in the aisle just E. of it was set one of the windows of the destroyed chapel. This is early geometrical and uniform with the rest. Near it, blocked in the wall, are the remains of the old piscina. To the same date belongs the beautiful arcade separating aisle and chancel.

The next addition, the S. choir aisle, is about 1300. The style is still geometrical, as is evident from the restored E. windows, which have spherical triangles in their heads. On the S. side are four plainer windows with intersecting tracery. The two chapels at the E. end had groined vaulting springing from two central pillars, features well restored by Sir Gilbert Scott. At the S.E. corner is a fine piscina and a rich canopied door leading to a newel staircase. The beautiful arcade separating the aisle from the chancel is nearly uniform with that on the N. side. The S. aisle of the nave is somewhat later Dec., and has been dated c. 1320. The S. windows have been made uniform in tracery with the other four in the same line. But in building this aisle the external W. wall of the choir aisle was not removed, but still remains a permanent barrier, containing a small door and a blocked window. Near the S.W. corner of the aisle are two Dec. doorways. But the side-columns

## DORCHESTER

of the restored W. window and still more the fine S.W. buttress with its niches are clearly of earlier date than the rest of the aisle. The probable explanation is that they must have been moved from other parts of the church. In this aisle is a side-altar, raised on some steps to form a small crypt beneath. At the back of the altar there is some old wall-painting, and at the side a Dec. piscina and sill-sedilia. Here is also the font, which is Norman, and of lead. On the sides are figures of the eleven apostles under canopies. Except at the neighbouring parish of Warborough there is no other leaden font in Oxfordshire, but there is a third just across the river in Long Wittenham (Berks). These three fonts seem the work of the same artist. Near the font there is a bracket with good Dec. carving attached to one of the pillars, showing several female figures underneath. Owing to the position of the cloisters, no N. aisle could be built to the nave, but late in the Dec. period three square-headed windows were inserted in the E. of the N. wall.

The latest alteration was the lengthening of the E. end, at the close of the Dec. period. This striking part of the building contains three large windows, beneath arches ornamented with ball-flower. All three display two remarkable peculiarities, *i.e.*, that the tracery is not confined to the head as usual, but continued throughout the whole window, and that internal sculptured figures are added to the tracery as extra ornaments. The E. window has a reticulated pattern, and is divided in two by a huge buttress. The top part is a restoration by Butterfield. To the N. is the celebrated Jesse window. Jesse is a recumbent figure at the

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foot, and from his body spring the branches of the tracery, which form a genealogical tree, with stone figures at intervals, showing the descent of our Lord. The painted glass figures are also intended to form part of the scheme. The effect, though intensely interesting, is not beautiful. The S. window seems the latest built of the three, and shows the approach of Perp. It has a transom with tracery below it, as well as in the upper part of the window. Notice the curious absence of continuous mullions. Under this window are the rich and beautiful sedilia and piscina. At the back of the sedilia are cut three curious small triangular windows filled with old glass, representing the life of St. Birinus. There is another piscina farther W., which belonged to the high altar before the church was lengthened.

The tower was rebuilt in the seventeenth century, but it contains some plain Norman windows which have been built up in it, and two Perp. windows in the ground storey.

In the S. chancel aisle there are four altar-tombs. Beginning at the S. these are: (1) John Stonor, Chief Justice, d. 1354.; (2) an unknown armed knight, of truculent expression; (3) perhaps Lord Segrove, Governor of Wallingford, d. about 1400.; (4) an unknown bishop (hardly one of the Dorchester bishops, since the monument is Dec.). There are also two brasses: (1) a mutilated one to Sir J. Drayton, 1431, with a Saracen's head showing behind *his* head; (2) a small one to a lady with no inscription. On the chancel floor is a brass to Richard Beauforest, Abbot of Dorchester, d. 1512, and also slabs to two other abbots, from which brasses seem to have been torn. In other parts of

## DORCHESTER—DUCKLINGTON

the church there are despoiled matrices, and at the W. end of the chancel a number of perplexing fragments, many showing Trans. and E.E. work, which must have belonged to the priory buildings.

*Drayton* (1) (2 miles N.W. of Banbury) has a little church in a secluded hollow. Its style is Dec., almost entirely late. One capital in the nave shows grotesque heads with interlaced arms, a feature common to many Dec. churches in North Oxfordshire. There are side chapels with piscinæ in both aisles, and the S. aisle chapel has sedilia as well, an unusual feature, to be seen also in Merton Ch. In the N. aisle is a low arched recess, considered to be a founder's tomb. There are also two fine fifteenth century altar-tombs with incised effigies to John Greville and Ludovic Greville. The Grevilles were at that time lords of the manor. The tower is modern.

*Drayton* (2), also called *Drayton St. Leonard's* (9½ miles S.E. of Oxford), is about 1½ miles N.E. of Dorchester. The church has a Norman nave, with two plain doors. There is an E.E. N. chapel, entered by two arches of unequal size. The chancel shows Dec. features, and there is a Perp. font, and two or three Perp. windows. Note a fragment of old glass representing a bishop, two piscinæ, and an aumbry with some Dec. bosses near it. There is a wooden belfry and six bells.

*DUCKLINGTON* (13 miles W. of Oxford, about 1½ miles S. of Witney Station) is a small village with a fine church. Of the original Trans. work there remain only the beautiful S. arcade, the lower part of the tower, and the font. The church was soon afterwards rebuilt (or possibly only completed) in the E.E. style, of which there are now left the

## OXFORDSHIRE

chancel (with its arch and side windows, piscina, sedile, aumbry and Easter sepulchre) and the S. aisle. There is one geometrical window S. of the chancel. The N. arcade with its beautiful clustered pillars is Dec. The N. aisle was elaborately rebuilt late in the Dec. period, when the Perp. style was close at hand. Finally in Perp. times two windows were inserted, one at the E. end, the other in S. aisle, and the upper part of the tower was built. The N. aisle shows peculiarities like that of Coggs, and the Wenman chapel at Witney. Probably all these are by the same architect. The late windows partly show flamboyant tracery, and a band of ball-flower runs as a cornice all round the aisle. There are two very rich canopied recesses for founders' tombs, and above on the walls are several groups of carved figures, representing scenes in the life of the Virgin Mary. A similar group is carved on the tracery of the E. window. The N. door with its porch is good Dec., and has a small crypt under it. Notice also the beauty of the corbels in the church, and the three dormer windows in the roof.

*Dunstew* ( $14\frac{1}{2}$  miles N. of Oxford,  $2\frac{1}{2}$  miles W. of Somerton Station) is  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile W. of the Oxford and Banbury road. It stands on high ground, some way above the Worton Brook, which runs in the valley to the N. The church is ivy-clad and picturesque. Two round-headed doors S. and the font indicate, if genuine,<sup>1</sup> an original Trans. church, to which the deeply splayed lancet in the chancel

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Parker says the S. door has Dec. mouldings, and calls the font "a clumsy imitation of Norman"; Mr. C. E. Keyser says that the S. door, "though round-headed, clearly belongs to the thirteenth century".

## DUNSTEW—EDGEHILL

may also belong. The present church is Dec., with a Perp. tower and a few other additions. The windows are mostly late Dec. The lofty N. arcade (Dec.) has capitals adorned with heads. The church was restored by Scott in 1861.

*Dyke Hills.* (See Dorchester.)

*Easington* ( $12\frac{1}{2}$  miles S.E. of Oxford) is a small hamlet with a tiny church. It lies about 1 mile N.E. of the Oxford and Watlington road, a mile after passing the Hampden monument. The church is mainly late E.E. with foliated lancets for windows, but retains a plain Norman door and font, and has a reticulated E. window. There is a Jacobean pulpit and a Dec. piscina.

EDGEHILL (8 miles N.W. of Banbury) is not in Oxfordshire, and has already been fully described in this series in the volume *Shakespeare's Country*. Yet it is so intimately connected with Oxfordshire both in history and geography, that a writer on that county can hardly venture to omit it. It is essentially a part of the North Oxfordshire plateau, but excluded from it by the unexplained eccentricity of the boundary-line, which, after skirting the edge of that plateau for miles, suddenly makes a bend to the S.E., thus leaving Edgehill itself in Warwickshire. The hill is really the escarpment of the plateau formed by the marlstone or middle lias, where it sinks abruptly some 350 feet to the plain of the lower lias. The traveller from Banbury ascends to this plateau after about a mile on the road. (For description, see Introduction, p. 4.) From this point the upward lift to the N.W., considerable as it is, is so very gradual that the eye fails to perceive it, so that the surprise is great when, after taking the right turn just after the seventh

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period, but it retains at least two Perp. windows, one of three-lights facing W., and blocked-up remains of others in the old flint walls.

*Emmington* (3 miles S.E. of Thame Station, about 16 miles from Oxford) is a remote hamlet. It has a small well-kept church, entirely Dec., with a saddle-back tower. Inside is a plain stoup, two piscinæ and an aumbry.

*Enslow Bridge* is a pretty spot on the Cherwell, near Kirtlington Station (8 miles N. of Oxford).

ENSTONE (14 miles N.W. of Oxford, 5 miles S.E. of Chipping Norton) consists of two large villages, Neat Enstone and Church Enstone, which stand on opposite banks of the little river Glyme, stretching down the steep slopes which descend into the valley. On high ground just S. of the village, in the angle between the roads running to Charlbury and Ditchley, lies a small holly-grove containing the ancient *Hoar Stone*. It is an upright stone 9 feet high, with two smaller stones lying beside it and suggesting a ruined cromlech. From it the name of the village has been derived, *i.e.*, Entastane = Giant's Stone; but Mr. Marshall seems on firmer ground in referring it to the Enis, the ancient name of the Glyme. Here there were some famous waterworks constructed by Thomas Bushell, and visited in 1636 by King Charles I. and Henrietta his queen. The spring which supplied them is close to the N. bank of the Glyme, and a little below the bridge crossed by the Oxford road. Nothing remains except a small weed-choked pool, but the group of old trees surrounding it, including a large yew-tree, is suggestive of past times. Later on the village became well known as a coaching centre with six inns and a

## EMMINGTON—ENSTONE

band playing every night. It may be recommended to the cyclist of to-day, for as many as ten roads converge on it (including those through Ditchley and Heythrop Parks, which are open to cyclists). The church was originally dedicated to a Saxon saint, St. Kenelm. It was, however, either rebuilt or largely added to early in the Trans. period. The rich S. door has little to distinguish it from pure Norman, but the S. arcade has pointed arches. There is a small N. door also in this style, but no window. In E.E. times the present chancel was built and the N. aisle with its arcade. The former retains no mark of the style, the E. window being a restoration. The N. aisle has one small lancet. Its arcade is mainly E.E., but the alternate pillars are fluted, and look very much as if they had been altered to Perp. All other features of the church are Perp., i.e., (1) the groined porch with parvise above; (2) the low squat tower—to erect which the aisle was docked of a bay; (3) the poor and late clerestory; (4) the font; (5) all the windows except the modern restorations. In the same period the aisles were widened at the E. end by the erection of side chapels, of which there was one on the N. side, and two, if not three, on the S. The wide depressed arches which form the E. bay of the nave were built to lead into them. Mr. Jordan, the historian of the church, explains this unusual feature by supposing that the arches were cut through the original Saxon walls, which till then had remained standing. The chapel nearest the chancel on the S. was most elaborate. (It must have been groined, since the springers of the vaulting are visible high up on the N. wall.) At the E. end of this chapel is a stone altar with an old reredos above it, a



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peculiar and interesting feature. In the S. aisle there are also two piscinæ, a remarkable tomb to Stevens Wisdom, d. 1633, two old brackets, an old stone coffin, and some chained books, one of which is Foxe's *Martyrs*. A little below the church is an old tithe barn.

*Epwell* (6 miles W. of Banbury) is an out-of-the-way village in a hilly district. *Epwell Hill* (743 feet) is one of the highest points in the strange-looking range of hills, so characteristic of this corner of the county, which has been caused by the denudation of the upper lias upon the middle lias plateau. The picturesque little church is "mixed" in style. Originally E.E., it has been largely altered to Dec. and several Perp. windows have been inserted. The S. chapel, entered by a plain E.E. arcade, contains a Dec. piscina and a curiously rude sedile. The chancel has another Dec. piscina, two low side windows, an E.E. window (S.), a Dec. window (N.), and a Perp. window (E.), with a foliated niche N. of it. The tower is built over the S. porch. It has been almost entirely altered to Dec., but retains E.E. belfry windows.

*Evenlode* (river). (See Introduction, p. 12.)

**EWELME** (14 miles S.E. of Oxford) is the prettiest of the Chiltern villages. For two miles after passing Bensington the road ascends gradually beside a bright sparkling brook, which is much used for growing watercresses. When we reach the foot of the outlier of the Chilterns on which the village is placed, the brook, which has just issued from the chalk, expands into the clear King's Pond, which, shaded by abundant trees, and with the cottages grouped round it, forms a delightful picture. Farther up the hill is a remarkable

## EPWELL—EWELME

group of fifteenth century buildings, comprising the church, the hospital, and the free school. All were founded in 1434-1436 by William de la Pole, Duke of Suffolk, the luckless minister of Henry VI., who in 1450 was made the scapegoat for the disastrous close of the Hundred Years' War, being seized and murdered when attempting to fly the kingdom. At Ewelme we catch a glimpse of him under widely different conditions, as the pious founder and benefactor, leading a quiet domestic life, and devoted to his duchess, from whom he had acquired the manor. She was daughter and heiress of Thomas Chaucer, probably son of Geoffrey Chaucer the poet, though this has been doubted (see also *Woodstock*). The manor-house in which they lived has disappeared, but the other buildings remain. The church is of course entirely Perp., and remains much as the founder left it. This is due mainly to Col. Martin, who was officer in command here on the Parliamentary side in the Civil War, and carefully protected the church from outrage. A memorial to him may be seen N. of the chancel. Structurally the church is rather disappointing, since the E. windows have depressed four-centred arches, and the pitch of the roof is low. But it contains objects of the highest interest. The font is octagonal, but its sides are oblong in shape, not square, which gives it a flat appearance. Above it is a magnificent wooden canopy, surmounted by a figure of St. Michael. At the E. end of the S. aisle is the chapel of the hospital, which is entirely covered on roof and walls with the letters I.H.S., the painting of which has been revived. It has a pavement of ancient tiles, and some Flemish glass in the E. window.

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It contains two remarkable tombs : (1) The magnificent alabaster monument of Alice, Duchess of Suffolk, the foundress, who lived on here after her husband's murder and died in 1475. She is wearing the *Garter* round her left arm.<sup>1</sup> (2) The monument of her parents, Thomas Chaucer and his wife, on which are good brasses to them and numerous coats-of-arms. The occurrence of the Roet arms among these is the principal evidence that this was the maiden name of the poet's wife. Oddly enough the Chaucer arms, which are on the poet's tomb in Westminster Abbey, and which Thomas Chaucer is also known to have used, do not occur. There are in addition as many as seventeen brasses in the church, dating from 1454 to 1695. The brass to Simon Brailles (1469) is fastened on to an earlier tomb, which has an inscription promising 100 days' pardon to whosoever prays for the soul of the occupant (an indulgence therefore not referring to Simon Brailles). The wooden screen on three sides of the chancel has, unfortunately, been badly painted.

From the W. door a covered flight of steps leads into the *hospital*, which is really an almshouse for thirteen old men and women. It is built of brick with some timber work inside, forming a cloister round a picturesque little quadrangle, with very pleasing effect. The road entrance is under a fine brick arch, from which a passage leads to the front door, over which is another brick arch, with a pattern of foliated tracery—a feature rarely seen in brickwork. The school buildings are also of brick, but have Perp. stone windows. All the buildings

<sup>1</sup> For another instance of this, see *Stanton Harcourt*.

## EWELME—FARINGDON (LITTLE)

are well preserved, and have been in use from the fifteenth century up till to-day.

*Eynsham* (6 miles W. of Oxford; station on G.W.R.) is reached from Oxford by crossing the Thames at *Swinford Bridge*. The views both ways from the bridge are fine, especially down the river, where the right bank is fringed with hanging woods for some distance. At Eynsham there was a famous Benedictine monastery, of which now not one stone remains, the last fragment having been destroyed in 1843, but the site is traceable in the meadow S.W. of the church. The church is entirely Dec. and Perp. The S. aisle and the chancel are early Dec. Both have windows of the geometrical period, those in the S. aisle being somewhat the earliest. The rest of the church (N. aisle, arcades, clerestory, font, and N.W. tower) is early Perp., plain but good. The Perp. columns are fluted, and have a strange oblong section. The position of the tower at the N.W. corner is unusual. The N. porch has a parvise over it. Note the piscina, opening of stairs to the rood-loft and a brass plate to Edward Stanley, 1632. N. of the church is an open space, containing the base and shaft of an unusually fine cross.

*Faringdon (Little)* (1 mile N. of Lechlade Station, about 20 miles W. of Oxford) is a small village on the confines of Gloucestershire. Although on the absolutely flat plain N. of the Thames, it is charming, being beautifully embowered in elm-trees. The interesting little church is almost entirely Trans. The most distinctive parts are the fine N. arcade and the chancel arch. In other features Norman and E.E. details are found side by side, and it is possible that there

## OXFORDSHIRE

may be three stages in the growth of the building. In any case there is very little later than 1220. A blocked round arch led into a vanished S. chapel. Between the lancets at the E. end is a Dec. canopy, and on the N. a beautiful Dec. aumbry showing the ball-flower. The only piscina is N. of the chancel arch. There is the usual Perp. clerestory, and the S. windows of the nave are Perp.; also the porch with its stoup. The plain font may be original. The bell-cot has been restored.

*Fifield* (about 4 miles W. of Shipton-under-Wychwood Station, or the same distance S.W. from Chipping Norton Junction) is a small village on high ground at the extreme W. of the county. The little E.E. church retains its original chancel, but the chancel arch and the narrow lancets to the N. are somewhat earlier than the other features. There is a late Dec. E. window inserted and two Dec. W. windows, which latter were retained when the nave was rebuilt in 1840. The S. porch, which has an extra stone rib in the roof, is E.E., also the curious W. tower, which is octagonal with a diminutive spire set upon it. There is an E.E. niche for the sanctus bell and a Perp. font. S. of the village are a square-built manor-house with modern windows; and a rebuilt Queen Anne house.

*Filkins.* (See Broughton Poggs.)

*Finnere* ( $7\frac{1}{2}$  miles N.E. of Bicester, 20 miles N.E. of Oxford) is a pleasantly situated village on the borders of Bucks. The Dec. church had become so ruinous that a thorough restoration was necessary, during which a new chancel arch and N. aisle were built. All the windows, including the clerestory, are Dec.; also the S. porch and the

## FIFIELD—FOREST HILL

tower, which are plain in style and perhaps earlier than the chancel. There are two low side windows and some good modern carved woodwork. The plain font may belong to an earlier church.

*Finstock* and *Fawler* (about  $2\frac{1}{2}$  miles S. of Charlbury Station) are two hamlets on different sides of the Evenlode, which have been joined to form a new parish. The church was built in 1841.

FOREST HILL ( $4\frac{1}{2}$  miles E. of Oxford) is a small village picturesquely situated on the side of a little hill. It is interesting as the scene of Milton's unfortunate first marriage. The neighbourhood was well known to the poet, since his grandfather lived at *Stanton St. John*, and his family are also traditionally connected with *Great Milton*. Some have even imagined the poet stood on the wooded knoll above Forest Hill when he composed *L'Allegro*, but the scenery described will suit almost any view in the midland counties. Here Milton came for a short holiday in 1643, and unexpectedly returned with a bride of seventeen, Mary, the daughter of the cavalier, Richard Powell. In the registers there is an entry of Mary Powell's baptism, but none of her marriage. In two months the bride deserted her husband and returned to her father's house, on which in high wrath the poet wrote his famous *Treatise on Divorce*. Some years later, when the Cavalier party was ruined, Mary entreated forgiveness with tears, and a reconciliation took place. Forest Hill has also its minor poet, Julius Mickle, who was married and buried here, and whose tomb will be found in the churchyard. He will be best known as the writer of the weird ballad on *Cumnor Hall*, quoted so often by Scott in *Kenilworth*.

## OXFORDSHIRE.

The church is almost entirely late Trans., quite at the close of the twelfth century. The beautiful S. door and porch, the deeply splayed lancet windows, the pillar-piscina and aumbry, and the W. bell-cot are all of this date. The rude and primitive chancel arch, however, must certainly be a relic of an earlier Norman church. The W. window and the *angla* buttresses are the sole Perp. additions. The wide and deep buttresses at the W. end were added for protective purposes in 1639, in which year also the roof was rebuilt. The rood-staircase is now used as an entrance into the pulpit. The church has been restored by Sir Gilbert Scott, who built a new N. aisle, destroying all the Trans. features on the N. side. The over-elaborate E. end had been built by Lincoln College a few years before.

*Four Shire Stone.* (See Chastleton.)

*Freeland* (about 9 miles N.W. of Oxford) is a new parish with a very well-appointed modern church.

*Fringford* (4 miles N. of Bicester) is a village near which traces of Roman occupation have been discovered. Among the cottages which stand round the spacious green is a house once belonging to the Addingtons, the most illustrious member of which family succeeded Pitt as Prime Minister in 1805, and was afterwards created Lord Sidmouth. The church has been nearly all rebuilt. The only ancient parts are the S. door and the N. arcade, which are Norman (with some approach to Trans.), and the S. arcade (Dec.), which shows grotesque female heads on two of its capitals. The rood-screen is old, and the pulpit contains some panels said to have come from an old house in Hardwick.

## FOUR SHIRE STONE—FRITWELL

All the windows, the tower and the S. porch are modern. The discarded Perp. font lies in the churchyard.

FRITWELL (2 miles E. of Somerton Station, 16 miles N. of Oxford) is a large village consisting of two parts, with a meadow between them. Each contained a separate manor. Of the manor-house in the S. part nothing remains but the old garden wall and a carved doorway in a stable. But in the N. part, close to the spring from which the place derives its name, is a beautiful E-shaped Jacobean manor-house, built in 1619 by Edward York, whose initials and the date are over the fireplace in the drawing-room.<sup>1</sup> It has been restored and set in first-rate order by its present tenant, the well-known architect, Mr. Garner (of the firm of Bodley and Garner). Its present cheerful appearance certainly belies its sinister reputation, due to the romantic tragedies connected with it. Mr. Mars-ham, a guest here in 1665, describes a drunken brawl followed by a duel next morning in which a Mr. Jackman was killed on the spot. Early in the eighteenth century the house was inhabited by two brothers called Longueville. There is a doubtful tradition that they quarrelled about a lady, and that the younger shut up the elder for 14 years as a lunatic in a sort of "dog-kennel" in the attic. The attic was removed in the late alterations, being found dangerously ruinous, but there was nothing in it really to corroborate the story. The so-called dog-kennel was a small lath-and-plaster cupboard, and it is quite absurd to suppose it can

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Garner has informed the writer that, in the alterations, an Elizabethan fireplace was discovered behind the Jacobean, showing that the house is older than here stated.



have been used to confine a man. Of course a lunatic *may* have been kept in the attic, for lunatics existed even before there were private asylums to which they could be sent. Another more authentic tragedy, verifiable by names and dates, is that of Sir Baldwin Wake, who, in 1735, when playing cards here with his two sons, quarrelled with the eldest, and by an unfortunate angry blow struck him dead. The younger son at once proposed to disappear, and take the suspicion upon himself. This was done, and the truth was only divulged 12 years later by the dying confession of Sir Baldwin. After these horrors the house was considered haunted, but there is no definite story that the ghosts of the two victims have actually appeared.

Across the road is the church, which is one of fourteen in England dedicated to St. Olaf. This saint (well known from Longfellow's *Saga of King Olaf*) was King of Norway, and tried to extend Christianity by methods worthy of his Viking ancestors. The building was originally Norman, transformed to E.E. by the addition of the chancel, nave aisles with arcades and tower. The only further additions were the insertion of some late Dec. and Perp. windows. The Norman remains consist of the chancel arch, now removed to the N. of the chancel, and the N. and S. doors, which are interesting. The N. door has a dripstone of cable moulding ending in two grotesque heads. The S. door has curious carving in the tympanum, representing two monsters devouring a tree. The E.E. part comprises the nave arcades and several lancets, especially in the chancel. The low side window and the font are Dec. Inside the S. door is a most curious early stoup.

## FRITWELL—GARSINGTON

*Fulbrook* ( $\frac{1}{2}$  mile N. of Burford), a small village, has an interesting church originally Trans. The original parts seem to be: (1) the chancel arch; (2) the N. arcade; (3) the S. door with its E.E.-looking porch; (4) the font; (5) a blocked archway near the pulpit, which may have led into a S. chapel. There are two late E.E. windows, one the E. window, the other S. of the nave, which shows internal foliation. A Dec. N. chapel has been built with two windows. With these exceptions, the other windows in the church are Perp. The tower has an E.E. basement, and a Perp. upper storey. There is a small brass dated 1623, and an ugly tomb to Maria Jordan. In the churchyard note a Perp. tomb and a fine yew-tree.

*Garsington* ( $4\frac{1}{2}$  miles S.E. of Oxford) is conspicuously placed at one end of a horse-shoe hill, Cuddesdon being at the other. From the high ground between them is one of the best views of the Chilterns. The village has the shaft of an old cross, raised on three steps. The churchyard is on a projecting bluff, commanding good views and entered by an old lych-gate. The church is a Trans. building, largely altered to Dec., but some of the details admit of doubt. The tower (low but good), chancel arch and N. arcade are certainly Trans., and most authorities consider the S. arcade also Trans., though others believe it Dec. The N. door, clerestory and all the windows are Dec. Two in the chancel have been lengthened to form low side windows. Of the nave windows, which are late, the E. window of the S. aisle has good tracery. The wooden S. porch is Perp. Note also: (1) two Dec. piscinæ; (2) angel-corbels supporting the roof; (3) late brass, 1584; (4) slab

## OXFORDSHIRE

on chancel floor with floreated cross and mutilated inscription, "Isabelle de Fortibus gist ici ; Dieu de sa alme eyt merci". This lady was Countess of Albemarle, and owned the manor in the thirteenth century.

*Gaunt House.* (See Northmoor.)

*Gibbet Oak.* (See Burford, p. 89.)

*Glyme (river).* (See Introduction, p. 12.)

*Glympton* (12½ miles N.W. of Oxford, 4 miles N. of Woodstock) is quite the prettiest spot on the river Glyme. The well-wooded valley, which rises steeply on both sides of the stream, is entirely taken up by a small but well-kept park (open to all, including cyclists). The church is in the grounds close to the house. It has been rebuilt, but retains a very wide and fine chancel arch (Norman) and an ivy-clad Perp. tower. The bowl of the font is also Norman. In the chancel is a brass to Thomas Teesdale, d. 1610, the benefactor of Pembroke and Balliol Colleges, and an elaborate tomb to Maud Teesdale his wife, d. 1616.

*Godington* (6 miles N.E. of Bicester) is an out-of-the-way village on the borders of Bucks. The church was rebuilt in 1792, but retains a plain Norman font, curiously built into the S. wall. An adjacent farm is surrounded by a fine moat.

*GODSTOW* (3 miles N.W. of Oxford) is the seat of a famous nunnery which lay close to the river, and was consecrated in 1138 in the presence of King Stephen. It is well known in connection with Fair Rosamond (see *Woodstock*), who may have retired here at the end of her life, and was certainly buried here. When St. Hugh, Bishop of Lincoln, visited the church in 1191, he found her tomb placed in the centre of the choir, and held in

## GAUNT HOUSE--GORING

high honour. He indignantly ordered her body to be thrown out and re-buried outside the church. The inscription on her tomb is said to have been :—

Hic jacet in tumba Rosa Mundi non rosa munda  
Non redolet sed olet quæ redolere solet.

This epithet was a stock one for any woman called Rosamond, so that no allusion is intended to Rosamond's frailty. After the dissolution the buildings were turned into a private mansion, which was fortified for the king in the Civil War, evacuated 23rd. May, 1645, and finally destroyed by Fairfax in 1646.

The ruins are extremely scanty. Nearly the whole extent of the boundary wall remains, but there is nothing to see in the interior, which is used for farm purposes. Facing N. is a blocked-up Perp. doorway, and at the S.E. corner are the ruins of a building built level with the outside wall, which, however, only shows two square Perp. windows on one side, and a gable end with small window and blocked arch below upon the other. The bridge over the river is old, the pointed arch next to the Trout Inn being original. Bridge, lasher and inn together make up a well-known picturesque scene.

GORING (station on G.W.R.) is a riverside resort of well-known beauty. It is worth noting that only two stations on the main G.W.R. line between Oxford and London are in Oxfordshire; i.e., Culham, where the rail cuts across the Abingdon bend of the river, and Goring, where it crosses the river at Moultsford and recrosses at Hart Wood. The beauty of the views at these four places where the Thames is crossed is very great, and should be

## OXFORDSHIRE

looked out for by travellers. In particular the reach leading to *Hart Wood*, one of the finest hanging woods on the Thames, should not be missed. Goring and its twin village, Streatley, on the Berkshire side, which is connected with it by a wooden bridge, mark the spot where the Thames exchanges the broad plain of its upper course for the chalk gorge, which it traverses till it finally escapes at Maidenhead. The river flows through the narrow *Goring Gap*, with the outliers of the Chilterna penning it closely on the left and the Berkshire downs still more closely on the right, where they form the striking bluff of Streatley Hill, studded with juniper bushes and with a line of beech-wood on its summit. Below, the beautiful lock and weir and the much-painted Streatley Mill complete one of the most celebrated Thames pictures. Unfortunately a place at once so picturesque and so accessible cannot escape the fate of being overbuilt, and the red-brick villa and lodging-house are far too prominent. The church is close to the bridge and the river. Most of the original early Norman structure remains, *i.e.*, the tower and nave of four bays, which was formerly aisleless and ended in an apse. About 1150 a nunnery was founded here, and the nuns built their church on to the E. end of the parish church, destroying the apse, and erecting a screen between the two churches. In the Trans. period the N. wall was broken through to form a narrow N. aisle. The arches of the original windows can still be traced. The Trans. arcade is very good, but the aisle windows were subsequently changed to late Dec. On the S. side there is a blank wall with only clerestory windows (Norman), showing that the cloisters of the nunnery



GORING CHURCH FROM RIVER



## GORING—HAMPTON POYLE

abutted on the outside. There are two round-headed recesses. At the Dissolution the nuns' church was entirely destroyed, and a blank wall was built at the E. end. This has now given place to a modern apse, built on the site of the original one. The foundations of the nuns' church were discovered in 1892. There are five brasses—one to Sister Elizabeth with a mutilated inscription, 1401; another with a Norman-French inscription to Henry de Aldryngton, 1375; the remaining three are dated 1600, 1615 and 1617. The tower is original Norman and is very fine. Notice the belfry-window with the baluster and lattice-work, the round stair-turret with conical top, and the groined vaulting in the interior. The top part and battlements are Perp.

*Gosford* (4½ miles N. of Oxford) is a small hamlet where there used to be a female preceptory of the Hospitallers, of which only two existed in England. There are no remains. For the fighting at *Gosford Bridge* see *Islip*.

*Greys Court.* (See Rotherfield Greys.)

*Grim's Dyke.* (See Introduction, p. 33.)

*Hailey.* (See Crawley, with which it forms one parish.)

*Hampton Gay* (7 miles N. of Oxford, 1½ miles N. of Kidlington Station) has a church on the E. bank of the Cherwell close to Shipton Church on the W. bank. It is rebuilt and without interest. Near it is the shell of a fine Jacobean manor-house, belonging to Wadham College, but unfortunately burnt in 1887. An adjacent paper-mill has also been burnt. The canal here was the scene of an awful railway accident in December, 1874.

*Hampton Poyle* (6 miles N. of Oxford) has a



## OXFORDSHIRE

small but very interesting church. A solitary lancet S. of the chancel shows that it was originally E.E., but the present features are almost without exception Dec.; not, however, all of the same date, but representing different periods of the style. The chancel has some early geometrical work, especially the very pretty E. window; the nave with its arcades and W. window are late flowing (about 1350), and the N. aisle, rebuilt about 1380, shows markedly the advance of Perp. The N. window of the chancel, which has a little old glass, is more decidedly Perp. In the chancel there is a beautiful geometrical aumbry, a plain piscina, and a blocked low side window. The N. arcade has a capital which shows grotesque heads with interlacing arms, a feature common to many Dec. churches in North Oxfordshire. The carving on one of the pews looks like a fox eating grapes. In the N. aisle are: (1) brass to John Poyle, 1434; (2) underneath it recumbent effigy of knight; (3) elaborate Perp. canopy with the Poyle arms (the effigy of the lady has only been placed under it recently); (4) small piscina, a basin resting on a head; (5) small recess containing an engraved Norman stone with a square hollow in it of which the use is uncertain.

HANDBOROUGH (9 miles N.W. of Oxford; station on G.W.R.) is the name of two villages, *Long Handborough*, remarkable for nothing but its length, and *Church Handborough*, which has a fine church, with a far-seen and elegant spire. Its history is obscure, but three main stages can be traced: (1) The walls of the nave-aisles are Norman, retaining some original windows and two doors. The interesting N. door has a tympanum with figure of St. Peter attended by a lion and a

## HANDBOROUGH—HANWELL

lamb. The effect is heightened by a fine E.E. porch. The aumbry also seems Norman, and the window E. of the S. chancel aisle, but these may not be in their original situations. (2) The chancel is E.E., the principal features being the chancel arch and two lancets. There are also two plate-tracery windows in the nave, showing the transition to Dec. The E. window is modern. (3) Except the insertion of three heavy and late Dec. windows no important change was made till the nave arcade with the clerestory was altered to fine Perp. with fluted columns. Several Perp. windows were also inserted, and the vestry built E. of the N. aisle. The appointments are mostly Perp., *i.e.*, the font, the well-carved oak pulpit, and a fine niche near the N. door. Also the screen, which is the glory of the church. It is carried across the chancel and both aisles, and retains its rood-loft complete in the aisles with the staircase leading to it. In the chancel is a fine recessed tomb, within which has been placed the brass of Alexander Belsyre (1567), first President of St. John's College. There are several piscinæ and three other small brasses. The tower and spire are very late Dec. or early Perp., but rest on E.E. arches.

Near Handborough is a bridge over the Evenlode, just below the point where the Glyme joins it. Over this bridge Charles I. marched on 3rd June, 1644, in his famous night retreat from Oxford, by which he eluded the enveloping armies of Waller and Essex. (See also *Yarnton* and *Burford*.)

HANWELL (3 miles N.W. of Banbury) contains the Tudor castle or castellated mansion of the Copes, who lived here in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Sir Anthony Cope was one of the

## OXFORDSHIRE

early Puritan leaders and imprisoned by Elizabeth. His son, Sir William Cope, entertained James I. here in 1624. Another Sir Anthony Cope sheltered here for some time a secret agent of Charles II. during the Commonwealth. The bravery of Robert Harris, rector at the time of the Civil War, is worth recording. When some Royalist soldiers were quartered here he preached against their profane swearing. They threatened to shoot him if he renewed the subject, but he intrepidly preached on the same text the next day, when one soldier raised his carbine and fumbled with the lock.

The *castle* used to be square, with a tower at each corner. It was dismantled about 1777, and only one of the towers is left. This is four-sided, battlemented, and with two octagonal turrets facing W. It is of dark warm brick, with stone quoins. Attached to it on the E. is a row of buildings with five Tudor windows on the N. side. All is at present being turned into a gentleman's residence. Below is an old garden and a pond. The interesting *church* lies to the W., and is reached before the castle. It is mostly Dec. but contains traces of E.E., especially the N. and S. doors, which are good. Perp. additions are the clerestory and roof of nave, most of the windows in the N. aisle, and the tower. The Dec. portions exhibit two peculiarities strongly characteristic of North Oxfordshire, *i.e.*, the grotesque heads in the capitals of the arcades, and the exterior cornice of figures of men mixed with animals. In the chancel are two blocked low side windows, priest's door, piscina and sedilia (all Dec.). The latter look absurd because the floor has been raised. Here also is the tomb of the first Sir Anthony Cope (d. 1614). In the N. aisle is a

## HANWELL—HARPSDEN

side altar with piscina and a stone reredos, consisting of six figures, of which three have lost their heads. In the S. aisle there is a third piscina and a tomb with a huge black marble top. The ornamented pinnacle on the S.W. corner was really a chimney. The font seems Trans., and must have belonged to an older church. The defacement of the capitals in the nave is said to be due to Puritan soldiers, who stabled their horses here.

*Hardwicke* (5 miles N. of Bicester) is an out-of-the-way village with a small church, lavishly restored in 1877 by the second Earl of Effingham, now buried here. The family seat of the Effinghams is  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles N.W. (see *Tusmore*). The chancel is late Dec. with three original windows, priest's door, piscina and low side window. The nave, also originally Dec., is now mostly Perp., with a very fine W. window. The S. aisle and arcade were added at the restoration. In it were placed an old Trans. door, relic of a former church, and an ancient stoup. W. and N.W. of the church is a farm-building containing some traces of the old manor-house, of which the fishponds are still existing.

*Hardwicke House.* (See *Whitchurch*.)

*Harpsden* (1 mile S. of Henley) has a rebuilt church. It retains a plain blocked Norman doorway (S.) and a Norman font. In a recess S. of the chancel there is the effigy of a knight (fourteenth century). There are five brasses, of which the most interesting are a nameless knight and lady, and a mutilated inscription, "... the mother of" (somebody, on whose soul) "God have mercy". *Harpsden Court* is a Tudor manor-house, now modernised, but picturesque with gables and creepers.

## OXFORDSHIRE

**HASELBY (GREAT)** (10 miles E.S.E. of Oxford) is a very pretty village, with some old-looking, well-built houses, especially the manor-house and adjacent buildings near the church. Inside the former is a very fine oak staircase. The rectory has had some distinguished owners, among whom are John Leland, the famous antiquary in Henry VIII.'s reign, and Christopher Wren, Dean of Windsor and father of the architect. The church is exceedingly interesting. The earliest portions are the nave arcades, which are almost E.E., but the square abaci and rudimentary foliage fix them definitely to the last decade of the Trans. period, *i.e.*, close on 1200. The beautiful S. and W. doors, in which the E.E. is fully developed, must have been just a little later. The chancel arch is of the same style, but the E. bay of the nave arcade shows later work, probably Perp. A possible explanation is that this was part of the chancel of an older church, which was left alone when the nave was changed to late Trans., but was afterwards altered to Perp. (compare *Enstone* and *Sewelcliffe*). The next stage in the building of the church is seen in the chancel, which is very beautiful early Dec. The fine geometrical windows recall those of Dorchester and Merton College Chapel. Above the windows is a band of leaf and flower moulding. The sedilia and piscina show good work of the period. There is a deeply splayed low side window (blocked), and an altar-tomb under an elaborate feathered arch. The nave aisles are Dec. and Perp., and both have chapels at their E. ends. Both also have long narrow squints opening into the chancel. The S. chapel is late geometrical, and has three windows

## HASELEY (GREAT)—HEADINGTON

in the style, of which the E. window is good. S. of it is a canopied niche, and near it are two piscinæ, showing the side altar was important. More westward there are three large foliated Dec. arches in the wall, and a mutilated effigy of Purbeck marble. The other two windows in the aisle are Perp. insertions. The N. aisle has three late Dec. windows and a canopied tomb-recess, but at the E. end a later chapel has been formed, with two Perp. windows, piscina and ambry. Here is the rich altar-tomb of Sir William Barendyne, Sheriff of Oxfordshire in the time of Henry VIII., and the last member of a family who lived at Little Haseley. An earlier interesting monument is under the tower, the effigy of a knight said to be William de Mandeville, Earl of Essex and Albemarle (about 1220). The clerestory and upper part of the tower are the usual Perp. There are several brasses—two in the chancel, one in the S. aisle (to William Lenthall, 1497), and three (inscriptions only) in the N. aisle.

*Headington* (2 miles E. of Oxford) is close to the main Oxford and London road, which after leaving Oxford ascends *Headington Hill*, a steep ascent bordered on both sides by the fine rounds of G. H. Morrell, Esq., to connect which a bridge has been thrown over the road. The old London road, however, did not pass by Headington, but turned right in the middle of the hill and passed over Shotover (*q.v.*). By this road Queen Elizabeth left Oxford in 1592 after the splendid pageantries of her last visit, and by this road the Royalist garrison marched out with the honours of war in 1646. About a mile beyond the hill Headington is left of the road. A more pleasant way of reaching the village from Oxford is by a footpath which

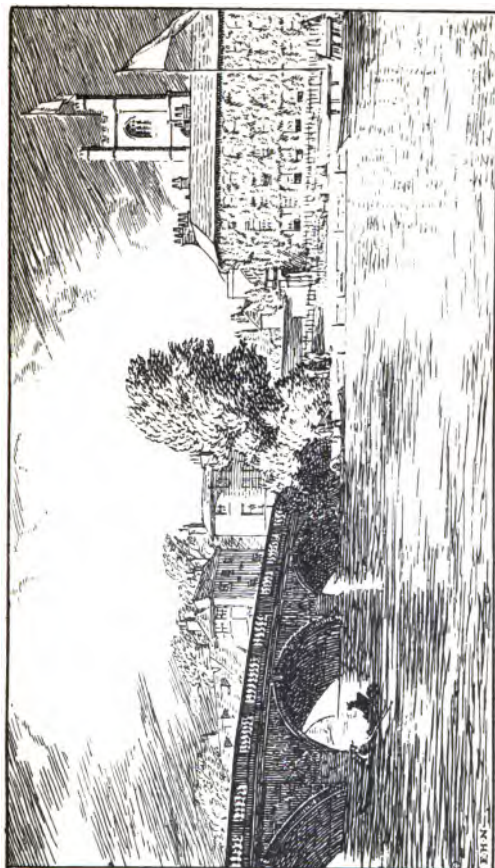
## OXFORDSHIRE

continues the Mesopotamia walk. At Headington there was a palace of King Æthelred, the traditional site of which is at *Court Close*, on the lane leading to Marston, N.W. of the village. The church was originally Norman, of which the chancel walls and the splendid chancel arch remain. When the nave was altered, a pointed arch was inserted over the original Norman one to relieve it of part of the weight (compare *Bampton*). Built up in the N. chancel wall are some Norman remains, but they have been cut into by the new vestry. The windows are later (a Dec. lancet, N.; two Perp., S.; and a modern one, E.). In the nave the only ancient part is the S. aisle, which with its arcade, windows, door and piscina is entirely E.E. The N. aisle and the W. end are modern. The lower stages of the tower, with its arches opening into the church, are also E.E.; the upper stage is Perp. There is a fine Perp. churchyard cross, on three steps, with panelled pedestal and octagonal shaft.

It was near Headington that the king, when an undergraduate at Christ Church, was, if the story be authentic, confronted by an irate farmer, over whose "tismuts" he had been riding. When the prince mentioned his rank, the farmer is supposed to have replied, "Who's to know that? Any of you scampering fellows can go and call himself Prince of Wales." The Prince's comrades soon rode up, and the matter was settled.

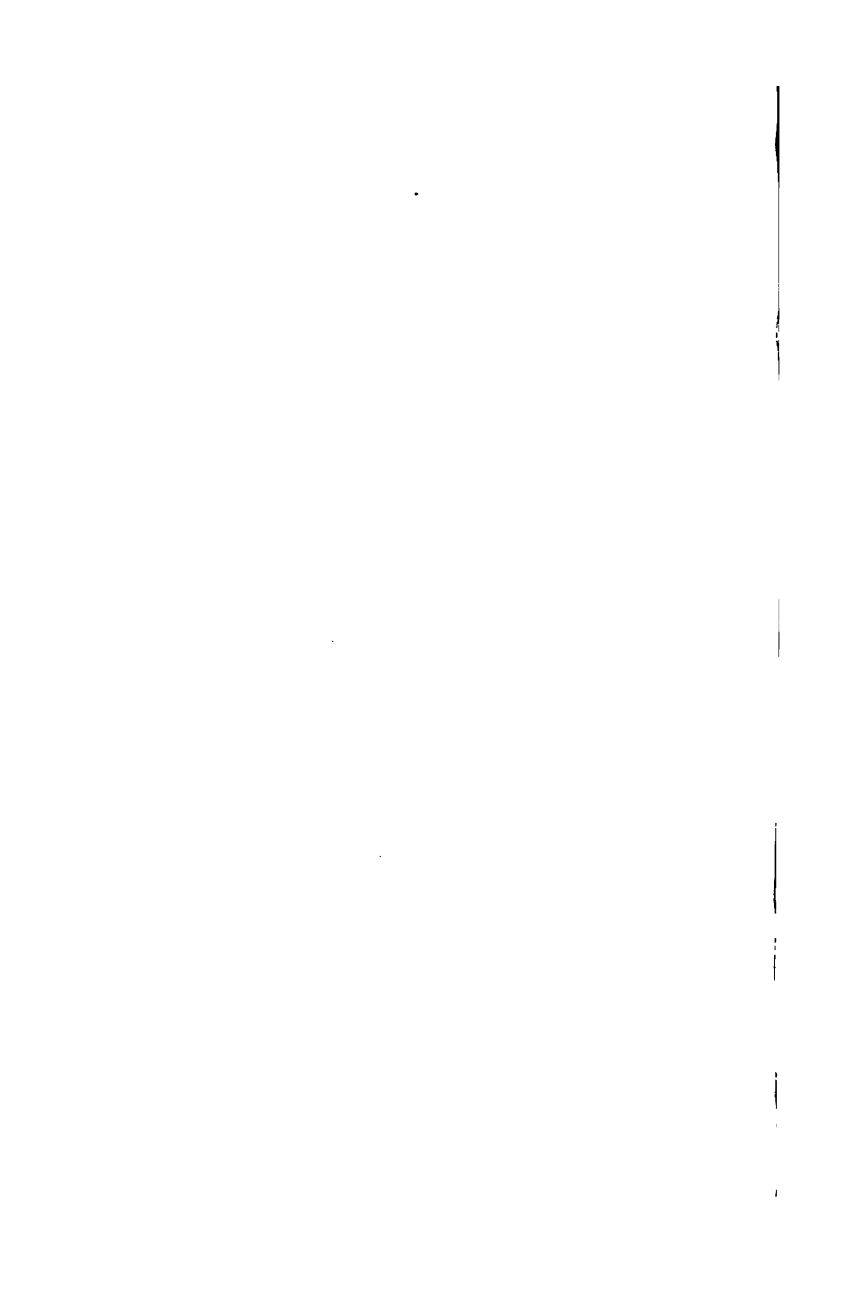
*Hempton*. (See Deddington.)

HENLEY (23½ miles from Oxford by road, 47 by river; station on G.W.R.) is in the S.E. corner of the county, close to the point where Oxon, Berks and Bucks meet. It is a pretty riverside town far famed for its regatta, which is held annually in the



HENLEY





## HEMPTON—HENLEY

first week in July. It dates back to 1839, in which year the Grand Challenge Cup for eight oars was won by First Trinity, Cambridge. The festival is now so popular that the water can hardly be seen for the crowd of house-boats and smaller craft, and the stewards often find it difficult to clear the course. The visitor will probably first stroll to the bridge, which was erected in 1786, soon after a flood had swept away the old one. The heads on the keystones of the central arch represent the Thames and the Isis, the former the conventional river-god with flowing beard, the latter a youthful maiden. They were carved by Mrs. Damer, cousin of Horace Walpole, by whom they are somewhat over-praised, though they have undoubted merit. The views are exquisite both above and below the bridge. The left bank, on which Henley itself lies, is low, since the Chilterns here recede considerably from the river, but on the right bank the beautifully wooded grounds of Park Place rise steeply from the water's edge. The regatta-course is a little below the bridge, but is concealed by the curve of Poplar Point. By walking a few yards down the river on the Henley side a good view of it is obtained, a broad, straight reach, which stretches for more than a mile between the poplars lining its banks to the gleaming temple on Regatta Island, beyond which rises the waving line of the distant Chilterns.

The ancient town of Henley, however, does not depend on river and regatta for its sole interest. It is of fair size, its present population being over 5,000. The inhabitants used to live mostly by trading in malt, which was sent to London in barges. During the Civil War Major-General

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Skippon, who held Henley for the Parliament, fortified Phyllis Court just N. of it, as a defence against Greenlands, a large Royalist mansion about 2 miles down the river (in Bucks). Fawley Court (also in Bucks), which lay between the two, came in for bad treatment from both parties. Phyllis Court is now quite modern, with no traces of the old mansion. Near the bridge is the *Red Lion Hotel*, well known to boating men, but even better known in old times, when the London to Oxford coach used to stop here. This was the inn on a window pane of which Shenstone wrote his too famous stanzas, the last of which, hackneyed though it be, a guide-book writer must not omit.

Who e'er has travelled life's dull round,  
Where'er his stages may have been,  
May sigh to think he still has found  
The warmest welcome at an inn.

Hard by is the church, whose tall flint tower of Tudor date, with its four hexagonal turrets, will be a familiar object to lovers of the river. The oldest part is the nave, the arcades of which, with the exception of the E. bay, appear to be early Dec. All the remaining ancient features, including the other arcades, and such windows as are not obvious restorations, are Perp. Though the church is much rebuilt and simple in detail, the long arcades and the aisles running the whole length of the edifice lend it dignity and spaciousness. Since the addition of a second N. aisle a door and window of the N.E. chapel (late Perp.), formerly exterior, now open into the church. The large monument under the tower is to a sister of Lord Bacon's, Lady Elizabeth Periam, who was mistress of Greenlands and died

## HENLEY—HETHE

in 1621. The cloak wrapped round the head gives her effigy an odd appearance. General Dumouriez (d. 1823) is also buried in the church. In the register for 4th July, 1591, is the baptism of William Lenthall (see *Burford*). At the back of the church are several almshouses founded in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, but all rebuilt in the nineteenth. The principal street is wide, with the Town Hall at the upper end, which contains a portrait of George I. by Kneller. Near the *Gatherine Wheel* is the house occupied by Mary Blandy, whose tragic story is worth repeating. She was the daughter of a rich attorney, and wooed for her money by a Captain Cranstoun, who was discovered by her father to be already married, and forbidden the house. The villain then sent the girl arsenic, which she administered to her father, thus causing his death. At the trial she declared she believed it was only a charm to make her father well disposed to her lover, but as she had burnt all letters and papers, she could not prove this, and was condemned and executed at Oxford (1752). After her death there was a popular reaction in her favour, and the cry of the "murdered maid" became as notorious at elections as the contemporary one of "Give us back our eleven days". Her ghost, riding a white horse, appears in a lonely road near Hambledon (Bucks).

*Hethe* (6 miles N. of Bicester) has a church which from the outside is picturesque, with its wooden belfry, and row of old Perp. windows above the lean-to roof of the S. aisle. Inside it is disappointing. Originally Dec., it contains no good feature, except the flamboyant window now E. of the N. aisle. There are two piscinæ, a

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squint and an old font. Half-way between Hethe and Hardwick is a well-appointed Roman Catholic chapel. *Shelswell Park* ( $\frac{1}{2}$  mile N.W.) marks the site of a vanished village and church, which were destroyed by one of the Copes of *Hanwell* (q.v.) in the seventeenth century. The house is now modern. The park is open to all, including cyclists.

*Heyford (Lower)* ( $12\frac{1}{2}$  miles N. of Oxford; station on G.W.R.) is named after the important ford over the Cherwell. After the bridge was built it was called *Heyford ad Pontem*. We first hear of the bridge as existing in 1279. This structure still partly remains, three arches on the S. being old. The village was afterwards called *Heyford Purcell* from the Purcell family, who migrated here from Newton Purcell. In 1527 the estate was sold to C. C. C., Oxford, who still hold it. The church was originally E.E., but the only trace remaining is one lancet in the chancel, unless indeed the piscina is E.E. The chancel was rebuilt in Dec. style in 1338. The nave shows some similar features, and was probably altered at the same time, but it has received several Perp. additions. It is uncertain whether the arcades are Dec. or Perp. The tower is Perp. At the E. end of the nave-aisles there are piscinæ and niches connected with side chapels. Note also the stoup, the rood-stairs, and the old sun-dial with motto "Nil nisi cœlesti radio". The font is dated 1662.

*Heyford (Upper)* (14 miles N. of Oxford,  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles N. of Heyford Station) is a picturesque village, straggling down a steep hill which overlooks one of the best reaches of the Cherwell Valley. It was formerly called *Heyford Warren*, after the family who held the manor, until in 1383 William of

## HEYFORD (LOWER)—HEYTHROP

Wykeham bought it for his recent foundation of New College. To this purchase is due the characteristic group of buildings which stand lowest in the village. There is the large Perp. barn, which should be compared with the tithe-barns of Swalcliffe and Adderbury, also associated with William of Wykeham ; the Elizabethan-looking house, formerly the rectory, but altered by New College to a manor-house for the tenant of their property ; and, rising above both, the old Perp. church tower. The rest of the church has been rebuilt. It contains, under a pointed arch, the recumbent effigy of a priest.

HEYTHROP (16 miles N.W. of Oxford, 3 miles E. of Chipping Norton) is the seat of Albert Brassey, Esq. The Heythrop pack of hounds will be familiar to all local hunters. The house is modern, on the site of an ancient mansion destroyed by fire in 1831. The park is well kept and full of fine trees, the beeches being especially beautiful. It is 4 miles long, but narrow in most parts, and is free for all to ride in. A splendid ride is to descend its entire length, from the Upper Lodge on the Chipping Norton and Banbury road to the Lower Lodge at Enstone. After a mile's riding the new church is passed, just beyond which on the S.E. is the chancel of the old church, now used as a mortuary chapel. The graveyard is entered by an old four-centred doorway. The chancel is Perp., but at the W. end are a Norman doorway and arcade, formerly the W. end of the original church. There is a Perp. font, piscina and aumbry, and some old stained glass. The figures in one of the windows are the same as those on the brasses of the altar-tomb below, *i.e.*, John Ashefield, wife

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and eight children (1522). Opposite is the tomb of George Talbot, fifteenth Earl of Shrewsbury, d. 1787. The Talbots were once owners of Heythrop.

*Hoar Stone.* (See Enstone and Steeple Barton.)

*Holton* (6 miles E. of Oxford, 1 mile N.E. of Wheatley Station) is a small village with a pretty little park, the manor-house in which was rebuilt in 1815. In the old house, as the parish register testifies, General Ireton married Bridget, Cromwell's daughter, in 1646. The cruciform church, just inside the park, was originally Trans., and has a beautiful N. door in the style, showing both zigzag and dog-tooth. Inside there is little Trans. work. The arches leading into the chancel and the transepts are original, but not very distinctive, and there is only one Trans. window (in the N. transept). The chancel was rebuilt in Dec. style. Finally, about 1450, William Brome restored both the S. transept and the nave in Perp. style, and added the effective tower. His brass is in the S. transept (1461), also one to another W. Brome who died in 1599 at the age of ten. There is a sanctus bell niche.

*Holwell* (3 miles S. of Burford) contains a church built in 1842.

*Hook Norton* (7 miles S.W. of Banbury; station on G.W.R.) is an ancient town, which according to the Saxon Chronicle was the scene of a massacre by the Danes in the reign of Edward the Elder. At present it is increasing in size and prosperity owing to the development of ironstone quarries in the neighbourhood. In the large church the most striking object is the Norman font, which has curious carvings on it, e.g., of Adam and Eve, and

## HOAR STONE—HORLEY

also of *Sagittarius* (as on the doorways of *Kencot* and *Salford*). The chancel is Norman with original walls and buttresses, but the windows are considered by Parker later insertions. Notice also the Norman imposts below the later chancel arch. The only E.E. feature in the church is the fine S. door with its porch. The nave and aisles are mostly Dec., with several Perp. additions. The nave arcades are not very distinctive in style, but are probably Dec. Most of the Dec. windows, including the E. window of the chancel, have good patterns. There is a Perp. clerestory and roof, and a five-light Perp. window over the chancel arch, with a band of open quatrefoils in front of it. Lastly the tower is Perp., with good W. window and door. Note the blocked low side window and the stairs to the rood-loft.

*Horley* (4 miles N.W. of Banbury) is a picturesque village which rises from a steep and narrow valley. The interesting church crowns the top of the hill. It is almost wholly late Dec., but shows traces of earlier work. The chancel is entirely Dec., but retains a very early piscina, probably late Trans. The tower, which is central, between chancel and nave, has Dec. features, but retains some indications, both inside and outside, that it was originally Norman. In the nave the arcades with the clerestories are Dec., and also the S. windows, but the font is plain Norman. There are three very good E.E. doors, and the W. window and those to the N. are early Perp. There are some remarkable frescoes; a large one of St. Christopher, where note the words put into the mouths of the figures, and another of St. Etheldreda, the patron saint. Also the chancel arch has repeated on it a



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design, suggesting an anchor inside a world. Note also newel staircase to rood-loft, piscina, and sedile in S. aisle, and bits of old glass.

*Hornton* (5½ miles N.W. of Banbury) is pleasantly situated in the upper part of the same valley in which Horley lies.<sup>1</sup> Round the green at the bottom of the valley are several houses, among them a gabled manor-house, with the date 1661. The church has been for years scandalously neglected, and with its broken windows and damp-stained walls, is a melancholy sight. It was originally Trans., in which style there remain the N. arcade and the font. Some E.E. alterations were first made, and afterwards more considerable Dec. ones, when the clerestory and S. arcade were built and nearly all the windows and doors altered. The E. and W. windows are now Perp. The lower part of the tower is E.E.; the upper part Dec., with a good geometrical window. The windows S. of church are mainly simple two-light foliated; those on the N. are flowing. There are traces of an arcade leading to a vanished N. chancel-aisle. A fragment of the old screen is used as the back of a pew in the chancel. Note Dec. piscina, blocked low side window, and brass to a man and his son, 1586.

*Horspath* (4½ miles E. of Oxford) is a pretty village lying under the S. slope of Shotover. The church has a late Trans. nave, with a rude plain S. arcade. There are no original windows, but the S. door and font are of the same early style, and also a curious object near the S. door, which is thought to be a stoup, but looks like the pedestal of a cross.

<sup>1</sup> On the character of these valleys, see Introduction, p. 4.

## HORNTON—IDBURY

The shallow transeptal chapel (S.) is early Dec. It has piscina and two windows, one very curious, *i.e.*, two ogee-pointed lights with an unfoliated circle over them. The chancel was rebuilt in 1840, the side Perp. windows being replaced, which are full of interesting old glass. In one may be seen Adam and Eve and the Crucifixion. The tower is good Perp. The lofty tower-arch has for corbels two curious figures, one playing the bagpipes. Tradition calls them Thomas London and his wife, and says they left money to build the tower.

*Horton.* (See Studley.)

*Idbury* ( $2\frac{1}{2}$  miles S.W. of Chipping Norton Junction) is in the N.W. corner of the county, close to the boundary-line. It is on high ground and commands an extensive view. The interesting church shows its early origin by a rich Norman door (N.) now blocked. The chancel is late E.E., with the E. window and two others in the style. The N. aisle mostly shows Dec. features. It has two good Dec. windows, but also two good Perp. insertions, with transoms and fine tracery. The arcade is probably also Dec. The nave has been entirely changed to Perp., with two tiers of windows on the S. side. The font is rich Perp. The basement of the tower seems Norman, but it has a good late E.E. window (contemporary with chancel) on the W. side, and the upper part is Perp. There is a squint which has curiously been built across an outside angle. Notice also : (1) Dec. piscina ; (2) door of rood-staircase ; (3) medallion of old glass ; (4) rood-screen now used to form a vestry ; (5) fine carving on many pews ; (6) beautiful sanctus bell niche.

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IFLEY (2 miles S. of Oxford) is one of the most charming villages near the city. The low hill on which it stands is best approached from the river, when the church appears at the end of a beautiful reach, above the willows which fringe the river-banks. A still better view, however, is that gained below the lock, looking across the weir-pool. The small island with its tall poplars, now somewhat decayed, the hurrying lasher, the picturesque old mill, and finally the grey church tower rising above a green garden-slope, complete a picture which has tempted the pencils of many artists. The well-known church is oblong, without aisles, and consists of a nave, a central tower, and a chancel of two bays. It was built about 1160, and represents the last stage of pure Norman, just before the Trans. features began to appear. The only subsequent changes have been: (1) the E. bay of the chancel has been entirely transformed to E.E.; (2) a pair of early Dec. (geometrical) windows have been inserted N. and S. of the W. bay of the chancel; (3) Perp. windows have been inserted—one pair N. and S. of the tower, another N. and S. of the E. part of the nave. Another Perp. window was also inserted at the W. end, but this has been removed. These Dec. and Perp. windows are obviously insertions, for outside they interrupt the Norman string-moulding, while inside the frames of the original Norman windows, ornamented with zigzag, can clearly be traced. These doubtless resembled the pair of Norman windows which still remain between the doors and the W. end.

The nave supplies one of the best examples of rich Norman work that we have. In particular



IFFLEY FROM THE RIVER



## IFFLEY

the W. end is very striking. The magnificent W. door is lavish in zigzag, and provides one of the best opportunities for the study of beak-heads. It has a remarkable dripstone, with a sort of chain-pattern of ovals, each containing a curious animal figure, some of which are apparently signs of the Zodiac. Above the door is a circular rose window, which is a restoration, and though inferior to the other work, is an improvement on the Perp. window it replaced. The row of small windows above it is very effective and beautiful. The N. and S. doors are also very fine, though they are eclipsed by the W. door. On the S. door there is a good rose-moulding. Inside there is a beautiful Norman font, with a square bowl of black marble. The tower is somewhat low, and not so much ornamented as the rest of the church. It is, however, very characteristic and highly effective. It rests on two fine arches profusely adorned with zigzag. The W. bay of the chancel is entirely Norman, but for the inserted windows. It is vaulted, the groining-ribs being ornamented with zigzag, and springing from vaulting-shafts, the ornaments on which should be noticed. The E. bay is E.E. It is also vaulted, and the slender grace of the ribs contrasts well with the heavier Norman in the other bay. It contains beautiful piscina, sedilia and aumbry, all uniform. The windows, however, are lancets of the broad, heavy type usually found early in the style, and the commonly assigned date 1270 must be too late. That this bay was a part of the original Norman church and not a subsequent prolongation, seems probable from the small Norman window in the E. gable and the blocked round arch on the S.

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The point, however, has been much debated, and Mr. James Parker conjectures that the Norman church ended in an apse. Note the variety of the buttresses. Besides the flat Norman ones, there are the E.E. corner-buttresses with small angle-shafts, and lastly the deeper buttresses of the Dec. period. In the churchyard there are a yew and a cedar, both fine trees, and a restored cross. The rectory is ancient, and shows some windows which look Perp.

*Ilbury* is a prehistoric camp, which crowns the summit of a little hill 1 mile S. of Hempton, near Deddington. The steep bluff on the W. side shows traces of a rampart, but on the gentler E. side it has apparently been levelled by the plough.

*Ipsden* ( $3\frac{1}{2}$  miles S.E. of Wallingford,  $16\frac{1}{2}$  miles S.E. of Oxford) is a pretty village lying under the Chilterns. The church is somewhat N. of the village. It is E.E. with a few Perp. alterations. The E.E. work is rude and early, and shows faint indications of lingering Norman (c. 1200). The chancel looks like an earlier and plainer edition of the chancel of North Stoke. The N. aisle is curiously narrow and deep. The S. aisle has disappeared, the arcade having been blocked up, and poor Perp. windows inserted. This may be plainly seen from the outside. There are brasses to Thomas Englysche and Isbell his wife (1525), both palimpsests. Near the church is a deep well sunk through the chalk (see *Stoke Row*). On the E. is *Beren's Hill*, which preserves the name of St. Birinus, the "apostle of Wessex". From its foot there flows past Ipsden an intermittent stream called the *Drincan*. Near two cottages half-way up the hill there was a well once considered Roman, but now filled up.



IFELEY CHURCH





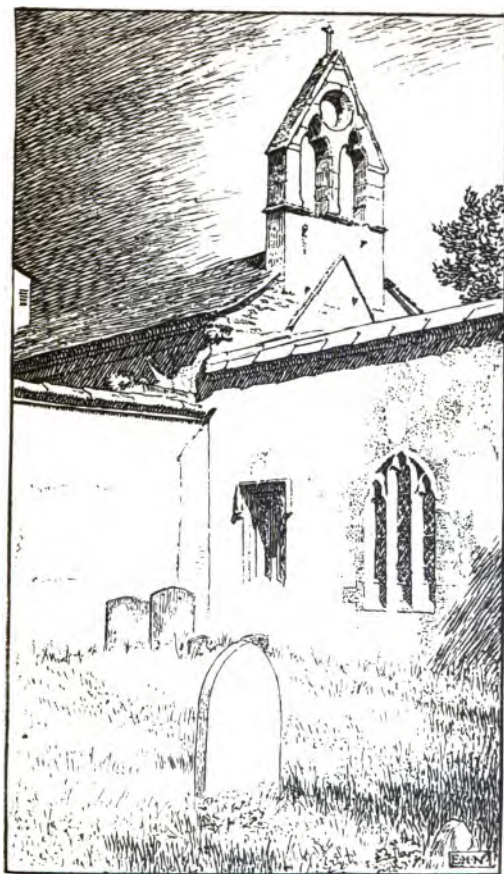
## ILBURY—ISLIP

*Islip* (7 miles N. of Oxford; station on L. & N.W.R.) is on the river Ray, a short distance above the point where it joins the Cherwell. Here King Æthelred the Redeless had a palace (as also at Headington), and here was born his son, Edward the Confessor, in 1004, who often dwelt here when king, and finally gave the place to his great Abbey at Westminster. In his deed of gift he says: "I have given to Christ and St. Peter at Westminster this small village wherein I was born, by name *Githslepe*". The royal palace and the chapel attached, which stood traditionally N.E. of the church, have now entirely disappeared. (For the story about its font, see *Middleton Stoney*.) Isabella, the "she-wolf of France," stayed at the manor-house here some time in 1326, when in rebellion against her unfortunate husband, Edward II., who had fled before her to the W. The neighbourhood of Islip was three times the scene of fighting in the Civil War. On 17th June, 1643, Essex attacked it unsuccessfully. In 1644 Essex and Waller concerted an attack on Charles at Oxford. Essex advanced from the E. and made a determined effort to pass the line of the Cherwell. On 28th May he was at Islip, and the next day attempted to secure Gosford Bridge by fording the river right and left of it, but after a desperate struggle was repulsed. He was equally unsuccessful on the two next days, both here and at Enslow Bridge. On 23rd April, 1645, Cromwell with 1,500 horse tried to surprise the Earl of Northampton, who was at Islip with a regiment of horse. The earl had been warned and retreated to Oxford, but next day he returned to the attack with three regiments, whom Cromwell defeated in a short sharp encounter.

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(For the sequel, see *Bletchington*.) The manor still belongs to Westminster, and several Deans of Westminster have held the living. The church has suffered much, first from mutilation, then from "restoration". The N. arcade is Trans. with two good pillars. The S. arcade is Dec., not entirely spoiled by restoration. The windows are Dec., but almost all are either new or restored. For restored windows the two facing N. in the aisle are not bad, seeing that their tracery had been cut out, and had to be replaced. A small round-headed window is not Norman, but an imitation of Charles II.'s time. The chancel was rebuilt in 1861, and replaces an interesting debased chancel of 1680, which was swept away. The tower is Perp., not very effective, and the font restored Perp. There are two or three late brasses of the seventeenth century.

KELMSCOTT (about 20 miles W. of Oxford, 3 miles E. of Lechlade Station) is a little village  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile N. of the Thames, just below where it enters Oxfordshire. The quiet loneliness of its upper course, its small stream and short reaches, seem to have a special charm for our poets. It winds gently through flat, lush meadows, and its solitude is so remarkable, that as far down as Oxford itself no village and scarcely even a house is set on its banks. Kelmscott is near enough to the river to be imbued with its spirit of quietude and remoteness from ordinary life. Here in 1871 William Morris fixed his country home at Kelmscott Manor, an unspoiled Elizabethan house with quaint gables and mullioned windows. For five and twenty years, till the day he was laid to rest in the quiet churchyard, this house and the Upper Thames were to him the



**KELMSCOTT CHURCH**



## KELMSCOTT—KENCOTT

main objects of "that passionate love of the earth" he felt so strongly. He has left a touching and imaginative description of them in the last chapter of his Utopian romance, *News from Nowhere*. One of his earliest visitors here was Dante Gabriel Rossetti, who came when his life was already darkened by the fatal influence of chloral.

The little cruciform church, with its strangely narrow and windowless N. aisle, is quite in keeping with the scene. Originally Trans., in which style there remain the N. arcade, S. door and font, it was transformed late in the E.E. period (about 1250), when the transepts were added, and the chancel rebuilt. In that style there remain four beautiful windows, grouped and foliated lancet triplets, the inner arches of three of which are foliated. At the same time, the sunken quatrefoil panels were added to the spandrels of the arcade; also the bell-cot was erected. There are the usual Perp. additions, *i.e.*, the clerestory and some inserted windows. The blocked arches in the corner between the N. transept and the chancel indicate that a squint formerly crossed the angle. There are two piscinæ.

*Kencott* (about 17 miles W. of Oxford, 1½ miles W. of Alvescot Station) has a small church of some interest. The S. door is Norman, and has on the tympanum a figure of Sagittarius shooting an arrow into a monster's throat (compare *Salford* and *Hook Norton*). There are other traces of Norman, in the nave and the tower, but the chancel was rebuilt late in the E.E. period, and shows grouped and foliated lancets. Similar windows were inserted in the nave, and later a Perp. clerestory was added. The chancel arch was originally Norman, but a

## OXFORDSHIRE

late arch has been built in below it, springing from two corbels of foliage. It is usually called Dec., but may be contemporary with the chancel. The lead-work of the font bears the date 1641, but the stone-work looks older, perhaps E.E. There is a nice E.E. piscina. The reredos was brought from St. Martin's Church, Carfax, Oxford, when it was taken down. The tower has a curious side turret which rises above it.

*Kiddington* (12 miles N.W. of Oxford, about 4½ miles S.W. of Heyford Station) is a village comprising two hamlets. *Over Kiddington* is on the Oxford and Chipping Norton road; it contains a good village cross, of course headless. Near it are the pillars which marked the old drive to the manor-house. *Nether Kiddington* lies below, in one of the sweetest spots on the sparkling little Glyme. The church hides itself in the grounds of a private house. The chancel walls, as the corbel-table shows, are Norman, and formerly ended in an apse. This was afterwards destroyed and the fine Norman arch leading into it, blocked by a Perp. window. Now the apse has been rebuilt, giving a Norman end to a church, which in all other details is good late Dec. The windows, mostly square-headed, have fine, though rather heavy, tracery. There is a S. chapel, entered by a single Dec. arch, round which a band of ball-flower runs as a string-course, and is continued on the chancel arch. The beautiful hexagonal font should be compared with that at Woodstock. The ivy-clad tower is Dec. Note also three Dec. piscinæ, the rood-stairs open to the church, the sedilia with the traces of a Perp. window above them, a brass dated 1513, and an eagle lectern.

## KIDDINGTON—KIDLINGTON

*Kidlington* (4½ miles N. of Oxford ; station on G.W.R.) is a large straggling village. The fine church is close to the Cherwell, and deserves careful study. Originally it was a cruciform E.E. structure, of which now there remain : (1) the piers and lower storey of the central tower ; (2) the N. and W. walls of the nave, in which there is a good door ; (3) the W. wall of the N. transept, containing two lancets. Traces of other lancets may be found in other parts of the church. About 1320 extensive Dec. alterations were made. The chancel was rebuilt and an aisle thrown out on either side, separated from it by Dec. arcades. All the windows of chancel and aisles were now altered to Dec., of which the two E. of the aisles have good patterns. At the same time the S. aisle of the nave was built, with its arcade and windows, and the very beautiful S. door and porch, which is adorned with ball-flower, and has an elaborate niche above it. In Perp. times another set of alterations took place. The transepts were mainly altered to Perp., and the usual clerestory was added both to nave and transepts. A Perp. window was inserted at the E. end, and a window and door at the W. end. Finally the beautiful tapering spire, conspicuous for miles round, was set on the E.E. tower. Inside the effect is rather disappointing, partly from the extent of blank wall in the nave, partly because the columns have plain shafts without capitals. The church is rich in piscinæ and niches, mostly Dec., but some Perp., which deserve examination. There are good Perp. screens in the aisles as well as the chancel proper. The stalls are old, richly panelled and with poppy-heads. There is some old glass in two of the chancel windows. The font is Dec.



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*Kingham* (1 mile N. of Chipping Norton Junction) is a village with a large green, whence a long street conducts to the church. This is at present entirely late Dec., with windows of the reticulated type, but its uniformity is certainly in part due to its last restoration, which has left it new and smug-looking. The chancel windows have interior foliage. The bench-ends are all of stone, which gives a weird ghost-like effect. There is an Easter sepulchre, inside which has been fixed a late brass dated 1588. In the outside wall is an altar-tomb with Dec. canopy. The ivy-clad Perp. tower has a Dec. window built into it. N. of the church are two old buildings, the rectory and the parsonage, neither of which is now the rector's home. (See also Introduction, p. 19.)

*Kingsey* (2 miles N.E. of Thame) was formerly in Bucks, but was transferred to Oxfordshire in 1894. The church was rebuilt in 1892.

*King's Sutton* (5 miles S.E. of Banbury; station on G.W.R.) is in Northamptonshire, just over the border, but it cannot be entirely omitted from this volume, since its tall spire is prominent in many North Oxfordshire views, and forms one of a triad linked together in the popular rhyme already quoted (see *Adderbury*). Its claim to "beauty" may certainly be allowed, though whether it is more beautiful than Bloxham spire is a more difficult question. It is somewhat the latest of the three spires, being good early Perp., and shows beautiful characteristic tracery. Its principal idiosyncrasies are the double pinnacles at each corner, tied to the spire by flying buttresses, and the systematic crocketing on each side of the spire. A detailed account of the church must be left for

## KINGHAM—KIRTLINGTON

the Guide to Northamptonshire. It was originally Norman, but has been largely changed to late Dec. It contains some fine windows with flowing tracery, and a Perp. Galilee porch (W.).

*Kirtlington* (9 miles N. of Oxford, 1½ miles N.E. of station on G.W.R.) lies at the junction of Akeman Street with the Saxon road called the Port Way, and was in Saxon times a position of some importance. It is a reasonable conjecture that here was the scene of one of Birinus' early missionary efforts, and that the name (= Kirklington)<sup>1</sup> indicates that here was built the earliest Saxon church in the neighbourhood. When the present Norman chancel was being restored in 1877, the foundations of an earlier apse were discovered within it, which may well be those of a Saxon church. The early ecclesiastical importance of the place is witnessed to by a synod held here in 977, and attended by Dunstan and King Edward the Martyr. The present church was originally Norman with a central tower, now rebuilt, but of which three old piers remain. The Norman chancel also remains, though over-restored, but the nave has been changed to elegant E.E. with two fine arcades of clustered pillars. The E. and W. windows are Dec. insertions. The S. aisle windows are Perp., and the clerestory debased Perp. The N. aisle has no windows, but striking interior flying buttresses. The blocked N. door is E.E., the plain S. door Dec. Note also the double piscina, low side window (Perp.), and the Norman tympanum now set over a doorway leading into the pulpit. *Kirtlington Park* is the seat of Sir George Dashwood.

<sup>1</sup> This suggestion is made on the authority of Mr. J. C. Blomfield.

## OXFORDSHIRE

In the eighteenth century a Lady Dashwood was intimate with the family of George III., and was expected to "make Princess Charlotte like herself". Her portrait by Sir Joshua Reynolds may be seen at Kirtlington. The house is Italian in style, but contains carvings by Grinling Gibbons. The park is extensive and beautiful.

LANGFORD (about 19 miles W. of Oxford, 2½ miles N.E. of Lechlade Station) is one of the pleasant stone-built villages on the flat meadows N. of the Upper Thames. It is not everybody who can appreciate this type of scenery, though those who wish to do so should come "when hay-time's here, in June". But at least the church-lover will find a rich treat here. In one afternoon, for instance, he can see the three fine churches of Bampton, Broadwell and Langford. The last named is full of curious and beautiful objects, but its architecture presents problems which the present writer cannot hope wholly to elucidate. The lower part of the central tower is, as at Bampton, very early Norman (or possibly even Saxon). The upper storey, with its large roll-mouldings, is late Trans., and the E. interior arch is of the same style. The rest of the church, nave and chancel alike, seems to have been built about 1200, in the last decade of the Trans. style, when it had all but changed to E.E. It is true that the details of the chancel differ widely from those of the nave, but this is by no means an uncommon feature in late Trans. work. That the beautiful nave arcades belong to this period is obvious. The lofty pillars are essentially E.E., but the arches which rest on them are round. At the W. end are thick lancets which may be original, but the side windows are



LANGFORD CHURCH



## LANGFORD—LANGLEY

Dec. and Perp. insertions, the finest being a reticulated window, with elaborate interior foliation. The aisles overlap the tower a little, a feature probably due to some later rebuilding. The chancel is more difficult to understand. It has been apparently restored more than once, and some of its features can hardly be original. The general effect of the lancet windows is E.E., but if the round arches introduced among the pointed ones are original, the whole may be safely dated about 1200. The piercing of the spandrels to form a sort of quatrefoil with the ogee curve must surely be a later addition. S. there is an E.E. piscina, and N. a very curious Perp. aumbry with six compartments. Outside there are several interesting features. S. of the chancel there is an elaborate priest's door with a canopy. On the S. side of the tower are two sculptured figures, who used to raise up a dial-plate, now vanished. On the porch are two most interesting representations of the Crucifixion in stone. In the one on the E. side, which is much the earlier in date, our Lord is wearing a cassock. The striking resemblance of this figure to a Saxon one in Romsey Abbey makes it possible that this too is Saxon.<sup>1</sup> The usual figures of St. Mary and St. John are found in both sculptures. In the S. sculpture the figures have somehow changed places, and are both looking away from our Lord. On the N. side of the chancel are large flying buttresses, bearing the date of 1574.

*Langley* (17½ miles N.W. of Oxford, 1½ miles W. of Leafield) is a hamlet formerly on the borders of Wychwood, but now on the bare downs, with

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Keyser considers it Norman.

## OXFORDSHIRE

hardly a tree near it. Here is a farm-house which incorporates the remains of a royal hunting-lodge. Tradition says it was built by King John, but there is no real evidence of royal occupation till a much later date. The building itself points clearly to Henry VII., as at least its enlarger. After this we hear of the Court coming here at intervals in the reigns of Henry VIII., Elizabeth, and James I., the last occasion being known to us from an entry in Shipton Register of the burial of "a French boy from Langley, the Court being there". A large part of one of the thick Tudor walls is still standing, with three original windows, two two-light and one three-light. Over one of the former inside are the initials H. and E., pointing clearly to Henry VII. and Elizabeth of York. There are also two slabs, now placed near the entrance, which show the same initials and the Tudor rose. Inside are two plain doors, and an old fireplace with the oven beneath the fire. The foundations of the vanished buildings can be traced N. of the house, and farther off is an old fishpond.

*Launton* (1½ miles E. of Bicester; station on L. & N.W.R.) has a church originally late Trans., of which the S. arcade remains. The tower is contemporary, or a very little later (the round arch of the hood-moulding shows that it is not pure E.E.). The N. arcade and the rest of the church have been completely altered to Perp. The Perp. stoup, sedilia and piscina are very good. The E. window glass is a memorial to Bishop Skinner, who retired here during the Commonwealth, when ejected from his see of Oxford. Here he continued to perform the Church of England services, and secretly ordained 300 clergymen. The late rector, the Rev.

## LAUNTON—LEIGH, NORTH

J. C. Blomfield, is the well-known historian of the Bicester Deanery. The rectory garden, S. of the church, contains a fine walk of old yew-trees, interspersed with gnarled elms.

*Leafield* (16 miles N.W. of Oxford, 4 miles S.W. of Charlbury Station) is a village on the summit of the high ground between the Evenlode and the Windrush. It was formerly in the heart of Wychwood, and the remains of the royal forest still approach fairly close to it on the N.W., where the ground falls away in the direction of Cornbury. On the other side the woods have entirely gone, but there is a far-reaching view over the flat country bounded by the White Horse Range. Rising above the village on one side is the ancient and tree-crowned *Leafield Barrow*; on the other side the tall white spire of the new church. Both are conspicuous landmarks and can be made out even from the hills round Oxford.

*Ledwell.* (See Sandford St. Martin.)

LEIGH, NORTH (12 miles N.W. of Oxford, 3 miles E. of Handborough Station), is a village on the S. end of the high plateau between the Evenlode and the Windrush. The church is somewhat below the crest of the hill on the N.E. side. It contains one of the three Saxon towers in the county (see Introduction, p. 35), and closely resembles St. Michael's, Oxford, in the double belfry window with baluster, and the long-and-short work, a good deal hidden by rough-cast. It was once the centre of a cruciform church, for the marks of the gables may be seen E. and W., and traces of arches leading from it N. and S. The S. door is Norman with billet moulding, and may be earlier than the present church, which is Trans., with two



## OXFORDSHIRE

characteristic arcades. The chancel was lengthened and practically rebuilt early in the Dec. period. It suffered from a subsequent "beautification," and when, at the last restoration, this was swept away, the architect unfortunately chose to erect a heavy new screen rather than to repair the old chancel arch, the side pillars of which may be seen somewhat E. of the screen. The S. aisle contains nothing of interest. On the N. side there are two chapels, the debased Perrott Chapel, remarkable only for the epitaph on James Perrott, 1724, whose appearance in heaven "exhilarabit civitatem dei," and the beautiful Wilcote Chapel. This is of rich Perp., with a fan-tracery roof, and elaborate windows with a little old glass. It is separated from the chancel by a fine ogee arch, under which is an altar-tomb with the effigies of a knight and lady, both of whom wear the S.S. collar. The lady is Lady Elizabeth Blackett, who first married Sir William Wilcote, and then Sir John Blackett, but which of the two lies beside her on the tomb seems uncertain.

About a mile and a half N.E. of North Leigh, and reached by passing through the hamlet of East End, are the remains of a *Roman Villa* (or country-house of some Romano-British landowner). They lie deep in the valley of the Evenlode, almost due S. of Stonesfield, and close to one of the places where the river is crossed by the railway. The foundations of several rooms have been excavated, but all have become grass-grown except one which is protected by a roof. This has a good tessellated pavement in four colours, black, white, red, and drab. At one end, which is open, the usual Roman heating arrangements may be clearly seen.

## LEIGH, NORTH—LEWKNOR

It is surrounded by an original wall, about 3 feet high, and there are four bases of Roman columns and some fragments of shafts. The original "villa" seems to have been built, like many Roman villas in Britain, round three sides of an open rectangular courtyard.

*Leigh, South* (9 miles W. of Oxford ; station on G.W.R.), is three miles S. of North Leigh. The church has a Norman, or early Trans. chancel, with original walls, showing one window, a door with cross in the tympanum, and pillar piscina. The chancel arch is E.E., but the rest of the church, including nave with N. arcade and aisle, lady-chapel and tower, has been altered to Perp. Two Perp. windows have also been inserted in the chancel, one of which has a curious wavy ornament round the head. Note also the Perp. screens, the stoup, and the pulpit, where John Wesley preached his first sermon in 1725. The wall-paintings in the church are remarkably fine, and have been carefully restored. Notice specially the "weighing of souls" on the S. wall, and the "Doom" over the chancel arch. There is a brass dated 1557, and scraps of old glass in the E. window of the lady-chapel.

LEWKNOR (15½ miles S.E. of Oxford, 1 mile W. of Aston Rowant Station) is a pretty village which lies, embowered in trees, under Beacon Hill, an outlying bluff of the Chilterns. It grows a good many watercresses. The interesting church looks over-restored from the outside, but, with the exception of the N. wall of the nave, no ancient work has really been modernised. The kernel of the church is Trans., of which the S. arcade and the chancel arch remain, though the Norman font

## OXFORDSHIRE

seems to point to an earlier building. Nearly all the alterations are Dec., the principal being the rebuilding of the chancel in geometrical style, and the alteration of the S. aisle to curvilinear. The W. tower is Perp. The N. chapel, rebuilt in 1734, is used as a mausoleum by the Jodrell family. The chancel is full of beautiful and delicate work. The windows are essentially lancets with geometrical tracery in the heads, and the use of the pointed trefoil makes it probable that the date is about 1280-1300. The corbels supporting the roof are well carved, some of them beautiful heads, others bosses of natural foliage, vine and oak-leaves. On the S. side are in succession: (1) sedilia and piscina with fine vaulted canopies. (Inside one there is an old brass to John Aldebourne, priest, 1370.) (2) Fine tomb-recess under a canopy, on which are three fingers of a hand in the act of benediction. The female effigy below was not originally placed here. (3) The priest's door under a crocketed canopy. (4) A blocked low side window. There is also in the chancel a reading-stand resting on a large boss of oak-leaves. There are two large Jacobean tombs dated 1620 and 1629, and a brass inscription 1611. The beautiful carving in the chancel seems due to the monks of Abingdon, to whom the church belonged.

*Littlemore* (2½ miles S.E. from Oxford; station on G.W.R.) has a modern church built by John Henry (afterwards Cardinal) Newman, and one of the first-fruits of the Gothic revival. It is E.E., plain and severe, but, for its early date, successful. Newman held the living together with St. Mary's, Oxford, and here, on Oct. 8th, 1845, he asked of Father Dominic the Passionist "admission into the

## LITTLEMORE—MAPLEDURHAM

one fold". A little E. of the church a turn marked "Private Road" leads in  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile S.E. to the *Minchery*, an oblong building formerly a Benedictine nunnery, now a farm attached to the Oxford sewage works. On the W. side the windows are of the plain Elizabethan type, but on the E., facing the garden, there is a row of one-light Perp. windows, with ornamented spandrils. Below them there was a row of similar two-light windows. There is a good Perp. door. Inside there are two old fireplaces and an oak staircase.

MAPLEDURHAM (N. of the Thames, about 4 miles above Reading) is one of the sweetest spots on the river. When rowing down the stream, we leave an open reach for a beautiful cluster of thick-growing willows and poplars, which shade lock, lasher and a picturesque old mill. Close on the N. bank is the little church, and just behind, so carefully hidden that it will come on many visitors quite with a shock of surprise, is the large ancestral mansion held by the Blounts for 400 years, and still owned by a lineal descendant of the family. The loneliness of its situation is remarkable, for it is cooped up between river and hill, with no roads except the rough tracks up the valley to Whitchurch and down it to Caversham. On the S.E. side is a fine avenue of elms, nearly a mile long. The house itself is Tudor, with Elizabethan additions. It is effectively built of red brick with stone dressings. It is kept strictly private. In the Civil War it was fortified by Sir Charles Blount for the King, but taken by Essex in April, 1643. Inside there is a fine collection of family portraits, among which are those of Martha and Theresa Blount, the friends of Pope. The poet's intimacy with Martha

## OXFORDSHIRE

was his nearest approach to a love-affair. When she retired here he wrote—

She went to plain-work and to purling brooks,  
Old-fashioned halls, dull aunts, and croaking rooks.  
She went from opera, park, assembly, play,  
To morning walks, and prayers three times a day.

The church has a Norman font and one Trans. arch, but otherwise is late Perp., much restored but still picturesque in effect. There is a modern N. arcade of wooden pillars. On the S. is the Blount chapel, walled off from the rest and containing some fine monuments, particularly the brass to Sir R. Bardolph, 1390, and the altar-tomb of Sir Richard Blount and his wife. It also has a piscina and a little old glass. In the village is a row of quaint little almshouses.

*Marston* is  $3\frac{1}{2}$  miles N.E. of Oxford by road *via* St. Clement's, but the field-paths by Mesopotamia and Marston Ferry are shorter. It is a village connected with the closing scenes of the Civil War. On 22nd May, 1645, Cromwell and Fairfax met here, to concert measures for the siege of Oxford. From here about a year later (11th May, 1646) Fairfax summoned the governor of Oxford to surrender, and here the capitulation was negotiated a few days afterwards. The old Elizabethan house, N.W. of the church, which was connected with these events, is still called *Cromwell Castle*. It has been rebuilt and almost totally modernised, but still shows at the back (N. side) two small gable windows, and an old door (blocked). The church retains its original nave arcades, chancel arch, and S. door. These are late Trans. or rudimentary E.E., but are plain and rude, with scarcely any



MAPLEDURHAM



## MARSTON—MIDDLETON STONEY

distinctive marks of style. All other features are Perp. The elaborate late Perp. of the chancel shows well from outside, and should be examined. Note also the scraps of old glass, the squint and the Jacobean pulpit.

*Merton* (10½ miles N.E. of Oxford, 4 miles S. of Bicester) is a village on the edge of Otmoor. It was long held by the Harrington family, whose Elizabethan manor-house still survives, but much altered. Its two most prominent tenants were very different in character. Sir James Harrington, the elder, was Puritan and regicide; his grandson of the same name was a spendthrift and devoted partisan of the Young Pretender. The church contains two geometrical windows, and Perp. clerestory and chancel windows. Otherwise it is entirely good late Dec. The N. arcade has been walled up, and the Dec. windows inserted between the arches. In the S. aisle there was an altar, the importance of which appears from the flamboyant E. window with its side niches, and the piscina and sedile adjacent. Over the S. door there is a Perp. rood-niche, resembling the one at Charlton. In the chancel there are extremely beautiful sedilia and piscina (S.), and W. of them a tomb under an ogee arch. N. there is a good aumbry, and a tomb to John D'Oyley and his wife, 1593, who owned the manor just before the Harringtons. There is also a blocked low side window and a Jacobean pulpit. The tower has lost its spire, which was taken down in 1796.

*MIDDLETON STONEY* (12 miles N.E. of Oxford, 3½ miles E. of Heyford Station) is a pretty well-wooded village containing the splendid *Middleton Park*, which is full of fine trees. It is the seat of



## OXFORDSHIRE

Lord Jersey, whose ancestors bought the estate in 1750. A few years later the old house was unfortunately burnt down, and replaced by the present one, which is of no architectural merit, but contains some good family portraits. Among them are George Villiers, first Duke of Buckingham ; his wife and children by Vandyke ; the Countess of Westmoreland, daughter of Mr. Child the great banker, and heroine of a famous elopement ; and her daughter Sarah, who, by marrying Lord Jersey, brought her grandfather's estate into the family. The story runs that the Earl of Westmoreland asked Mr. Child at dinner what he ought to do if he were in love with a girl and her father refused consent. "Why, run away with her," was the answer. Next morning Miss Sally Child was missing. The banker pursued the fugitives, and, according to one version, ran them so hard that Lord Westmoreland had to shoot one of his pursuer's horses. There is a well-known picture (by Heywood Hardy) on this subject. But the more probable version is that a well-mounted groom rode ahead of the banker's carriage and overtook the fugitives, on which Miss Sally called out "Shoot, my lord, shoot !" The groom's horse fell dead and the couple reached Gretna Green safely. The groom was afterwards lodge-keeper at Middleton Park, and always expressed great admiration for "Miss Sally's pluck".

The church is in the park. Close to it are the foundations of a castle. It was built in 1135 by Gerald de Camville, then lord of the manor, and was one of the many castles built in Stephen's reign which were demolished in the next. Of the original Trans. church there remain the N. arcade,

## MIDDLETON STONEY—GREAT MILTON

one window N. of chancel, chancel arch, and two remarkably beautiful doors. The tower also looks Trans., but on inspection is seen to be good E.E., though early in the style. The S. porch also is E.E. Later additions are: (1) the S. arcade and two windows in chancel (Dec.); (2) clerestory and aisle windows (Perp.); (3) the modern Jersey mausoleum (sham Norman) which goes far to spoil the church. The Dec. and Perp. windows have been restored. The font really belongs to the royal chapel at *Islip* (q.v.). Some enthusiast has cut on it an inscription stating that Edward the Confessor was baptised in it, but unfortunately it is obviously late Dec. There are two Dec. piscinæ.

*Milcombe* (5 miles S.W. of Banbury) has an E.E. church, with a few Dec. features, but restored and uninteresting. There is a good Perp. screen. The carving hung up in the aisle apparently belongs to some old pews.

*Milton*.—There are four villages of this name in the county, but three are of no account. The name probably = Middletown, and is very common. One is between Adderbury and Bloxham, a second is Milton-under-Wychwood, a third is Little Milton. All have modern churches. The fourth is:—

**GREAT MILTON** (9½ miles E. of Oxford, 2½ miles S. of Tiddington Station), a village well built of stone, on both sides of a wooded hollow. It is probable that the family of the poet Milton took their name from the place. The house in which tradition says his ancestors lived<sup>1</sup> is on the N. side of the hollow, not quite facing the church, a gabled

<sup>1</sup> This tradition clearly includes apocryphal elements. The writer was informed that the poet had written *Paradise Lost* on some stone steps below the house!

## OXFORDSHIRE

Jacobean house with mullioned windows. There is no direct evidence of this, but the family is known to have been connected with other places in the immediate neighbourhood (see *Stanton St. John* and *Forest Hill*). Another important Oxford family, the Dormers (see *Ascott* and *Rousham*), had a manor-house here, of which only the gateway remains. The church is large and splendid. Of the original Norman structure there are but faint traces, *i.e.*, a pair of small windows in the chancel (one blocked) and indications of a N. arcade with round arches, now encased in the later work. The present church is due to two great rebuildings: (1) E.E., when the nave arcades and chancel arch were built, and the very beautiful N. doorway added; (2) late Dec., to which are due nearly all the windows (including those of the clerestory), the tower arch, and the external buttresses in the S. aisle. The S. porch with parvise is later (early Perp.), and the upper part of tower, and a window above the chancel arch are also Perp. Many of the Dec. windows have fine flowing patterns, especially the E. window of S. aisle. Note in the chancel the sedilia and piscina (late Dec., but restored). Opposite are a double aumbry and a very curious circular recess of earthenware, closed by a wooden door. Antiquaries have not yet finally decided what it was used for. The side chapels used to be divided by arches from the rest of the aisles. In the S. aisle is a fine Dec. piscina and a brass to William Eggerley, and some children of his (1546). In the N. aisle there is a plain piscina close to the rood-stairs, which have a window, and have been walled up with old material. The E. window of the aisle has a little old glass, and below it are two

## GREAT MILTON—MINSTER LOVELL

tombs with floreated crosses, one of Purbeck marble. There is a Jacobean pulpit. Under the tower is the tomb of Sir Michael Dormer, d. 1618. There is a curious peep-hole from the belfry into the church.

*Minchery.* (See Littlemore.)

MINSTER LOVELL (3 miles N.W. of Witney, 15 miles from Oxford) was from Norman times till 1487 the seat of the Lovell family. It is named Minster from a small priory, founded by Maud Lovell in John's reign, which was among the alien priories dissolved by Henry V. The church and manor-house were soon afterwards built by William Lord Lovell. His grandson, Francis Viscount Lovell, the last of the family, was a strong partisan of Richard III., and advanced by him to office. His name occurs in a well-known Lancastrian rhyme as "Lovell that dog," the allusion being probably to the family crest. After the accession of Henry VII. he was a prime agent in the rebellion of Lambert Simnel, which was crushed at Stoke in 1487. His fate is uncertain. He is reported to have been killed in the battle, but it was also said that he was seen trying to swim the Trent on horseback; and the tradition runs that he escaped to Minster Lovell, and hid in a vault where he afterwards died of starvation, in consequence of the sudden death of the only servant who was in the secret. This was confirmed by the discovery of a vault in 1708 containing the skeleton of a man who had died sitting at a table, with book, pen and paper before him. All crumbled to dust when the air was admitted. This story only comes to us second-hand, but it is possible that it may be true.

The effect of the village as seen from the Witney

## OXFORDSHIRE

and Burford road, which runs above the Windrush Valley; is very picturesque. The church and ruined manor-house form an effective group beyond the bright and sparkling Windrush, which a little higher up is crossed by an old Perp. bridge, just at the point where it runs nearest to the steep oolite bank descending from the road.

The *manor-house* was very extensive, but much of it has entirely disappeared, and the N. part is too mixed up with a farm for its several parts to be traceable. It seems to have had no military defences except a moat, of which the Windrush was the S. side, and traces of which are to be seen in a copse to the W. Of the S.W. wall a detached portion remains, with two foliated lancets, a ruined Perp. window and a newel staircase. Nearly due E. of the church is the most continuous part of the ruins, containing the hall. This is entered from the N. by a long vaulted porch leading to a good Perp. door. It contains four Perp. windows (two N. and two S.), high up in the wall, and with fine curtain arches. N. of it is another room with a row of Perp. windows, of which the curtain arches are fine, with quatrefoils in the spandrils. Further N. is an old dove-cot. Very few other features are traceable, but the general effect is picturesque.

The cruciform church is entirely good Perp. The windows, though of different sizes, are uniform in pattern, and most contain some remains of old glass. All the doors are good. The central tower is vaulted internally and supported on square piers, of which the W. ones are completely detached from the side walls, and the E. ones partly detached, leaving a squint on either side, the openings of which are cinque-foiled. This strange but effective arrangement

## MINSTER LOVELL—MIXBURY

gives a distinct character to the church. On the N.E. is the original vestry, with an old wooden door, and a curious small squint. The octagonal font is good Perp. In the S. transept is the splendid alabaster tomb of the founder, William Lord Lovell (about 1430), not, as it is sometimes stated, of Francis Viscount Lovell. There is another tomb dated 1695, and a note explaining an acrostic brass inscription.

A little S.E. of the village, on the hill, are the *Charterville Allotments*. In 1847 the "National Land Company" started by the Chartist leader, Feargus O'Connor, bought here a farm of 300 acres, divided it into allotments with cottages, and set eighty-one North country mechanics to live on them. The scheme was unsuccessful, nearly all the settlers soon failing. That, however, the allotments were not too small to live on is shown by the fact that at present they are held by agricultural labourers, who maintain themselves by growing strawberries and potatoes.<sup>1</sup>

*Mixbury* (1½ miles from Fulwell and Westbury Station, Bucks; 21 miles N. by W. from Oxford) is a small village on the borders of Buckinghamshire. The church has a good Norman S. door, but there is no other original Norman work, the porch and chancel arch being modern. The rest of the church, including the clerestory and the tower, is now Dec. The chancel windows have good late geometrical patterns; the nave windows (mostly flowing) have, as a rule, been restored. N. by E. of the church are the foundations of an old castle called Beaumont. No stones remain,

<sup>1</sup> See *Three Centuries of North Oxfordshire*, chap. xiii.

## OXFORDSHIRE

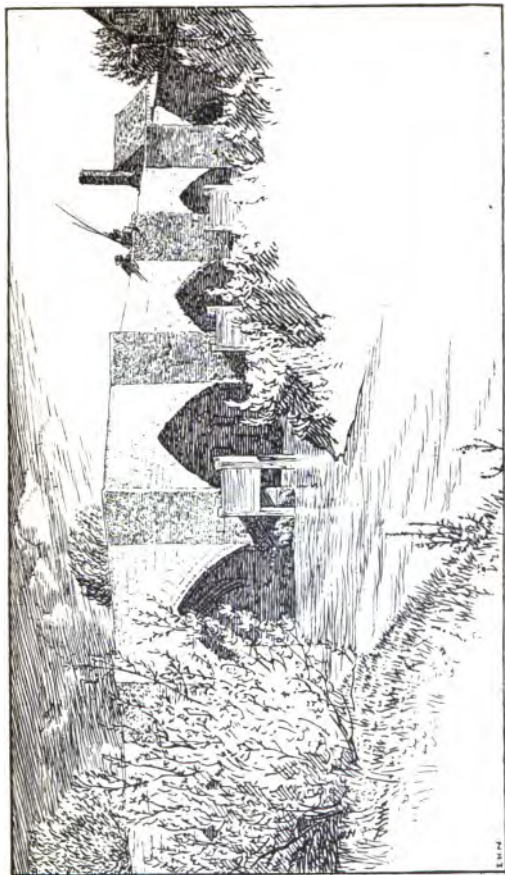
only grass-grown mounds, but the hollows representing the moat are unusually deep.

*Mollington* (4½ miles N. of Banbury) has a church mostly simple Dec., with Perp. clerestory and tower. The font is Trans. (restored). The N. aisle of the nave has been rebuilt. An exterior piscina and two blocked arches show that it once extended N. of the chancel as well.

*Mongewell* (1½ miles S. of Wallingford) is a pretty village close to the Thames, with a park full of fine trees, and a quaint rectory near a large clear pool, which, however, requires cleaning out. The church had a Norman chancel ending in an apse. This has been rebuilt, but some of the window-arches seem to show traces of original work, and there is an old aumbry. The nave appears to be "Georgian".

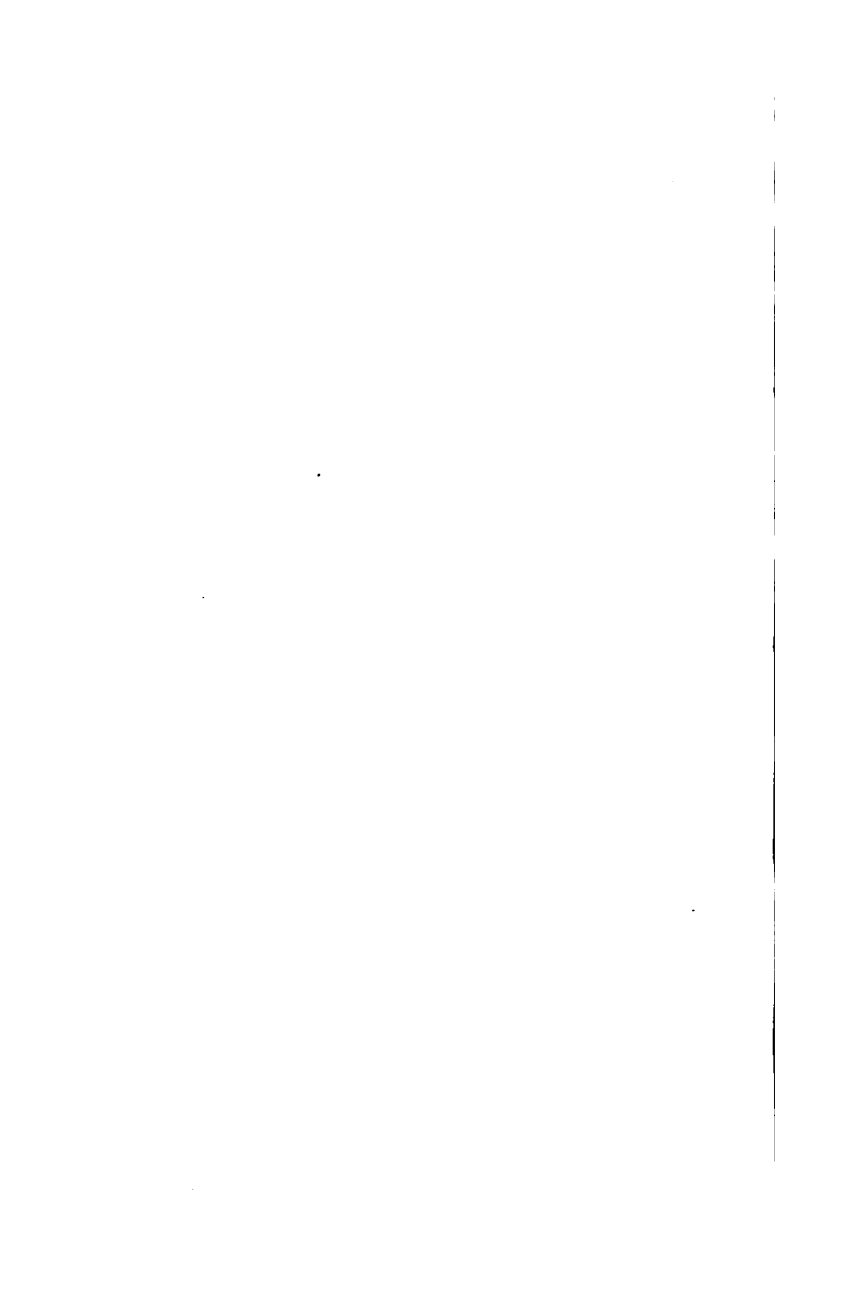
*Nettlebed* (18 miles S.E. of Oxford, 5½ miles N.W. of Henley) is a village on the top of the Chilterns, over 650 feet above sea-level, on the direct road between Oxford and Henley. It is surrounded by breezy commons and magnificent beech-woods, which are specially attractive on the Henley side. A little N. is *Nettlebed Windmill*, on one of the sand-hills of Tertiary formation, which have been left by denudation on the top of the chalk. It has been called the highest point of the Chilterns, but is really under the 700 feet, whereas many parts of the range are above 800 feet. The view, though good, has been over-praised, for, since the point is in the centre of the Chiltern plateau and not at the edge, its immediate surroundings are comparatively level. The church is modern.

*Newbridge* (10 miles S.W. of Oxford) is, in



NEWBRIDGE—WINDRUSH JOINING THAMES





## MOLLINGTON--NEWINGTON, SOUTH

spite of its name, one of the oldest bridges on the Thames, and crosses it just where the swift current of the Windrush mingles with its broader and sedater stream. The bridge has five pointed arches, and triangular buttresses facing up-stream. The position was of importance in the Civil War. In 1644, when Essex and Waller were attempting to hem Charles in at Oxford, the bridge, which was held for the king, was attacked by Waller. On 2nd June he forced a passage, the immediate result of which was Charles's night retreat on 3rd June. In 1649 the mutinous Levellers attempted to cross here, but were repulsed, and finally crossed the Thames higher up, and marched to Burford.

*Newington* (9 miles S.E. of Oxford) is a village on the Thame. The church contains the only old spire in South-East Oxfordshire, not, however, a striking one; for it is short and stumpy. There are two Norman doors (one with curious zigzag work in the dripstone), and some traces of E.E., *i.e.*, one lancet, the lower part of the tower, and the font. Most of the other features, including nearly all the windows, are Dec., but there is a Perp. screen, and one or two Perp. windows, one of which N. of the chancel has some old glass. In the chancel there is also a tomb-recess, with foliated arch (Dec.), and a tomb to Walter Dunch, 1650.

*Newington, South* (5½ miles S.W. of Banbury), is a village in the valley of the Swere. The church is unspoilt and exhibits a remarkable mixture of styles. The N. arcade is early Trans.; the S. arcade and aisle E.E. The W. part of this aisle retains an original door, and two lancet windows, but the E. part has been altered to an early Dec. chapel with a piscina of the same period. The

## OXFORDSHIRE

chancel is much later Dec., also with a characteristic piscina. Still later is the elaborate chapel in the N. aisle, which has Trans. to Perp. windows, with scraps of old glass and traces of frescoes. In the Perp. style are the clerestory, the E. window, probably the upper part of the tower, and the S. porch with adjacent window. The porch is elaborate and handsome, with crocketed pinnacles. There is a Norman font and blocked low side window. *North Newington* is a hamlet some miles to the N.

*Newnham Murren* (14 miles S.E. of Oxford) is on the E. bank of the Thames, opposite Wallingford. The church was originally Norman, largely altered to E.E.; but a restoration in 1849 has left very little that is really old. The chancel arch is Norman, and there is a remarkable Norman squint, an E.E. piscina, and a brass dated 1593, with a bullet-mark on it, a memorial of the siege of Wallingford in 1646.

*Newton Purcell* (6 miles N.E. of Bicester) derives its name from the Purcell family, who afterwards migrated to Lower Heyford. On the site of their house only a moat remains. The church was rebuilt in 1876, but retains a fine Trans. doorway showing dog-tooth moulding, an E.E. piscina, and an incised stone (fifteenth century) in memory of a heart.

*Noke* (8 miles N.E. of Oxford, 1½ miles S.E. of Islip) is a small village on the S. edge of Otmoor. The little church, originally E.E. but with sixteenth century alterations, has few distinctive features, but is quaint and well kept. Note, (1) E.E. font; (2) Perp. niches either side of chancel arch; (3) Jacobean pulpit; (4) iron hour-glass stand; (5)

## NEWNHAM MURREN—NORTHMOOR

brass to Johan Bradshaw, 1598 (the wife of two husbands), who "newly built the chapel" (*i.e.*, a mortuary chapel N. of the church, and no longer existing).

NORTHMOOR (8 miles W. of Oxford) is reached from Oxford by passing Cumnor, and descending to the ferry at Bablockhythe. Here we cross the "stripling Thames" with Matthew Arnold's Scholar-Gipsy, and soon afterwards take the turn to the left. The village, though quite on the flat, is picturesque, and the church is a little gem. It is cruciform without aisles, and practically all one style, *i.e.*, about 1260-1280, the border-land between E.E. and Dec. The chancel may be somewhat earlier than the rest, for the foliated lancet windows, sedilia and piscina, and chancel arch with the dog-tooth on one capital, are still in essence E.E. ; but nearly all the other windows throughout the church are plainly transition to Dec. The details of the E. window and the four nave windows should be carefully noticed. The piscinæ in the transepts may be of the same style, but the niche is later Dec. Three windows only are later Dec. insertions, the W. window, and those N. and S. of the transepts. A Perp. tower has been oddly fitted on to the W. gable. The font is E.E. in character. In the N. transept there are good effigies of a knight and lady, a child's stone coffin, and tomb of Robert Lydall, 1721, who gave the bells. S.E. of the church is a very picturesque Elizabethan house, once the rectory, and a quaint old dove-cot. About a mile W. are the *Long Bridges* over the Windrush, near which,  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile N. of the road, is *Gaunt House*, now a "lonely moated grange," but formerly a manor-house belonging to Dr. Fell,

## OXFORDSHIRE

Dean of Christ Church, and an important fortified post in the Civil War, held for the king, and taken by Col. Rainsborough (1st Jan., 1645).

*Nuffield* (17 miles S.E. of Oxford, 4½ miles E. of Wallingford) is on the edge of the Chiltern escarpment, S. of a breezy common now consecrated to golf. The S. wall of the church is original Norman. It is of flint, but has some red tiles built up in it, curiously like Roman brick. The original window-openings have had Dec. windows inserted. Early in the Dec. period the N. aisle was thrown out, and all the other windows were, at that time or later, altered to Dec. The chancel has now been rebuilt. The font has a curious inscription in Lombardic characters:—

(Fon) te sacro lotum vel mundat gratia totum  
Vel non est sacramenti mundacio plena.

A brass with a half-effigy, 1360, has a French inscription.

**NUNEHAM COURTNEY** (6 miles S. of Oxford) is the well-known seat of the Harcourt family. (*The park and gardens can be seen on Tuesdays and Thursdays during the summer. The regulations are somewhat complicated, and application should be made by letter to Mr. H. Gale, Nuneham Courtney. The house is not shown, and cycles are forbidden.*) The manor has passed through many hands, and acquired the name Courtney from its possessors in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. In 1710 it was acquired by Simon Harcourt, Lord Chancellor, who, in the next year, in which he was created a baron, transferred the family seat hither from Stanton Harcourt. The great house was built by his grandson, the first Earl Harcourt, who

## NUFFIELD—NUNEHAM COURTNEY

also bodily removed the village, which formerly was near the house, to its present position on both sides of the Oxford and Henley road. The cottages are well built and picturesque, and but for the fact of their being in two straight lines the village would be pretty. The same Lord Harcourt demolished the old church, and built a new one. The result of this is that the village has three churches. First, there are the ruins of the old church, to reach which take the Baldon road left, just beyond the village, and when close to the first cottage left of the road, take a footpath right which leads across one field to the ruins. These comprise little but two windows and an arch (all E.E.). Here also is the fine altar-tomb of Sir A. Pollard and his wife, d. 1577. Secondly, there is Lord Harcourt's church, close to the house. It is only remarkable as an illustration of the depraved taste of the eighteenth century, and is no longer used. A third new church has been lately built near the village. The house is not attractive externally, but contains many treasures, among them the pane of glass on which Pope wrote the inscription quoted under Stanton Harcourt. The pictures include family portraits by Kneller and Sir Joshua Reynolds, and other celebrated pictures, e.g., Two Beggar Boys by Murillo, Susannah and the Elders by Caracci, Henrietta Maria by Vandyke, and others. The gardens were laid out partly by "Capability" Brown, partly by the poet Mason. Where the former's genius had fair play the results are charming, but the poet's "classical" taste has littered up a considerable part of the grounds with grottoes, statues and tablets with poetical inscriptions. The great park with its fine oaks and elms is thoroughly

## OXFORDSHIRE

beautiful, the most charming part being that which borders on the Thames, and which is often made the goal of a river-picnic. Here is built a pretty cottage for the accommodation of guests, just opposite the point where a rustic bridge crosses to an island. Below, for nearly  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile, hanging woods, the principal glory of Nuncham, slope to the left bank of the river, while a little N. is Whitehead's oak, with a distant view of Oxford, and near it the highly ornamental conduit which formerly stood at Carfax, Oxford. This was presented to the city in 1610 by Otho Nicholson, whose initials are repeated on it, and in 1787 was removed, and set up by the second Earl Harcourt in its present position. Nicholson belonged to London and his connection with Oxford is unknown, but he also appears there as a benefactor of Christ Church Library.

At the cross-roads, about 1 mile beyond Nuncham Courtney, on the Oxford and Henley road, there used to stand an inn of bad reputation, called the *Golden Ball*. Here a guest was once murdered by his servant, who confessed the crime years afterwards. The landlord was discovered, knife in hand, in the murdered man's bedroom, and hanged for a crime which, as it was discovered subsequently, he had intended but not committed.

*Oddington* (8 miles N.W. of Oxford, 2 miles N.E. of Islip Station) is a small village on the edge of Otmoor. In the twelfth century a Cistercian abbey was founded here, but the monks found the site so damp that they soon removed to Thame Park, and no trace of their building remains. The church was E.E. with a Perp. chancel. It has been rebuilt, but the E.E. tower, font and S. door remain, and a Jacobean pulpit. In the chancel is a



NUNEHAM





## ODDINGTON—PIDDINGTON

piscina, the head of an old Perp. window, and a brass to Randolph Hamsterley, 1518, who is represented as lying in a shroud and eaten by worms.

Otmoor is an extensive tract of flat swampy ground in the N.E. part of the county. Formerly it was common land, over which the inhabitants of the surrounding villages, Beckley, Charlton, etc., used to have grazing rights. These, however, were of little value, since the district was then merely a marsh, where the sheep got the "rot," and the cattle the "moor evil". It was drained and finally enclosed about 1830, a process attended with such serious riots, that a judge in 1834 said at the Oxford assizes that he hoped he had heard the word Otmoor for the last time. It is still swampy, being the flattest portion of the broad belt of the Oxford clay, and imperfectly drained by the Ray, which flows past Islip into the Cherwell. The views over it from the hills to the S. and E. are fine, but it is an awkward region to traverse, for there are no roads, only miry tracks, the principal of which was the great Roman road between Alchester and Dorchester, running across the moor from N. to S. At the centre, where the tracks cross, is *Joseph's Stone*, which some authorities think may have been an old Roman milestone. It does not lie on the actual Roman road, but about fifty yards to the W., on the track running to Oddington.

*Piddington* (11½ miles N.E. of Oxford, 5½ miles S.E. of Bicester) is an out-of-the-way village under Muswell Hill, on the confines of Bucks. The church is very interesting. The chancel supplies an example, even more beautiful than that at Northmoor, of late E.E. passing in to Dec. The

## OXFORDSHIRE

windows are grouped and foliated lancets, and show most graceful internal foliation. The E. window in particular is recessed beneath a trefoiled arch, with trefoils pierced in the spandrels. Inside piscina, sedilia and Easter sepulchre are all beautiful Dec. work. The nave (mostly Perp.) is featureless and inferior. Note the remains of fresco of St. Christopher. The low W. tower is late Perp.

*Pishill* (18 miles S.E. of Oxford, 5½ miles N. of Henley) is a village in a picturesque "bottom" or valley on the far side of the Chilterns. The church had once some Norman features, but it has been rebuilt and is quite without interest. The curiously deep aisle was the Stonor Chapel. In a barn W. of the rectory are the remains of an E.E. window, usually supposed to belong to a chapel.

*Pyrton* (14 miles S.E. of Oxford, 1 mile N. of Watlington) has a church rebuilt in 1855, but retaining several fine Norman features, *i.e.*, the chancel arch, the S. door, two small windows in chancel, and the font. In this church John Hampden married; in 1619, Elizabeth, daughter of Edward Symeon, who lived in the beautiful red-brick Elizabethan manor-house, still to be seen near the church. Here he first intended to retire when he received the fatal wound at Chalgrove, but the enemy lay in the way, and he was forced to ride to Thame.

*Radcot Bridge* (19 miles W. of Oxford) is an ancient bridge, the first under which the Thames flows on entering Oxfordshire. It has three pointed arches ribbed beneath, and in the centre is a pedestal said to have formerly supported a figure of the Virgin. The main stream of traffic passes now by a new cut, avoiding the old bridge. Here in

## PISHILL—ROLLRIGHT

1587 Robert de Vere, Duke of Ireland, minister of Richard II., was surrounded by the forces of the Lords Appellant. He was defeated, and saved his life by swimming down the stream.

ROLLRIGHT.—There are two villages of this name. *Great Rollright* (3 miles N. of Chipping Norton) has an interesting church. It retains two Norman doors, of which the S. door shows beak-head mouldings and grotesque carving in the tympanum. The kernel of the present church is E.E., to which style belong the S. arcade and chancel arch. The S. aisle with the porch is beautiful late Dec., with two fine windows, one showing the transition to Perp., and a rich cornice. The porch once had a parvise. The chancel, clerestory and tower are Perp. The Perp. rood-screen is gorgeously coloured, but the rood-loft has been detached, and absurdly fixed to the roof. There is a late Dec. or Perp. font, two piscinæ, and a brass dated 1525. *Little Rollright* (2½ miles N.W. of Chipping Norton) lies in a deep hollow, and consists of three houses and a tiny church, which is entirely Perp. with good chancel windows, canopied niches on either side of the E. window, and a curious cup-shaped font. There are two large altar-tombs, one to Sir Edward Dixon, 1647, the other possibly to one of the Blowers, who lived at the manor-house close by, and one of whom also rebuilt the tower in 1617. The *Rollright* or *Rollrich Stones*, "the Stonehenge of Oxfordshire," are on the extreme summit of the high ridge, on the S. slope of which both villages lie, but very much nearer to Little Rollright. They are absolutely on the county boundary, of which the road along the ridge forms part. This is the one prehistoric stone

## OXFORDSHIRE

circle in Oxfordshire, but, apart from the desolation of the wind-swept ridge, it seems rather lacking in impressive dignity. This is due partly to the size of the circle, which dwarfs that of the individual stones, partly because the stones are of the oolite of the district and have crumbled and weathered a good deal, partly also to the ugliness of the protecting railing. There are about sixty stones, of which the tallest, that on the N., is 7 feet 4 inches. In the centre is a clump of firs. A little N., just across the Warwickshire boundary, is the *King's Stone*, a monolith about 8 feet high, with a fantastic suggestion of human shape. The village of Long Compton, deep set in the valley beyond, is visible from the whole ridge except at this point, where it is concealed by a barrow-like swelling of the ground. These features are explained by a quaint legend. Once upon a time there was a king of these parts, who wished to be King of all England, and was marching northwards with his army for that purpose. As he crossed the lone ridge he was met by the witch of the place, who was angry at the invasion of her territory. She told the king that if he could once see Long Compton, he would be King of all England. The king joyfully hastened on in front of his army, but when he reached the top, and expected to see Long Compton, he found that the witch had miraculously caused the ground to rise in front, concealing the view. When he still attempted to go forward, the witch exclaimed :—

Move no more, stand fast, stone,  
King of England thou shalt be none.

On this the king and his army were at once turned into stones. The witch herself at the same time

## ROLLRIGHT—ROTHERFIELD GREYS

became an elder-tree, and in that form keeps watch over her victims. It is said that if this elder-tree be cut, the witch's power becomes less, and the King's Stone may be seen to move and struggle to come to life. It is, however, difficult to test this story, as it is uncertain which of the many elder-bushes near the spot is the magic tree. Another legend is that at twelve o'clock every night the stones come to life, join hands, and dance round in a ring. At midnight on Saints' Days the stones are supposed to rush tumultuously down the hill to drink at a spring below. About  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile S.E. there is a group of five other stones, which clearly formed a cromlech. They are called the *Whispering Knights*, who in the legend were supposed to be conspiring against the king. On clear days there is a very fine view N. over the Warwickshire plain.

*Rotherfield Greys* (3 miles W. of Henley) is a small village close to which is the ancient mansion of GREYS COURT, an estate which has passed through several noble hands. It takes its name from the De Grey family, one of whom, John de Grey, was created Lord Grey of Rotherfield by Edward I. The second lord nearly lost his estate by drawing a knife in the presence of Edward III. On the death of the fifth Lord Grey the estate soon passed by marriage to William Lord Lovell, builder of Minster Lovell Church. After the disappearance of his grandson (see *Minster Lovell*) the estate was forfeited to the Crown, and bestowed by Henry VIII. on the Knollys family, who also held Caversham Park. Sir Francis Knollys was treasurer of the household to Queen Elizabeth. His son, Sir William Knollys, afterwards created Lord Knollys of Greys, entertained both Elizabeth and James I.

## OXFORDSHIRE

at Caversham. When the Earl and Countess of Somerset were convicted of the murder of Sir Thomas Overbury, they were placed in the custody of Lord Knollys and detained at Greys Court. In 1708 the estate was sold, and soon passed by marriage to Sir William Stapleton, in whose family it still remains.

The buildings are of extreme interest. The Elizabethan mansion of the Knollys family, now much modernised, stands in a sort of large quadrangle, formed by the outer wall of the castle of the De Greys. This dates from 1348, when John, the second Lord Grey, obtained licence to crenellate. Of the extensive walls the E. remains entire, and a small part of the W. At each corner there was an octagonal tower, of which three remain, only the N.W. one having disappeared. The S.W. tower is unbattlemented, and the adjoining wall is now part of the offices. Close to it is the well-house, which is Elizabethan. The well is about 200 feet deep, and is worked by a donkey treading inside a large wheel, as at Carisbrooke Castle. Between the N.E. and S.E. towers the wall is continuous. Almost 50 yards S. of the N.E. tower there is a larger square tower, of an ecclesiastical appearance, and often mistaken for a church. These two towers and the wall between them are thought to be John De Grey's original work. They are built of flint and brick. Much of the brick used is thin, and curiously Roman in appearance (see also *Nuffield*). Farther S., a little W. of the wall, are the old stables, which have Elizabethan windows, and were used as barracks in the Civil War. Just E. of this, on the wall, are the so-called remains of the chapel. These are two blocked arches, one of

## ROTHERFIELD PEPPARD

them pointed, the other nearly triangular, above which is herring-bone work of the curious Roman-looking brick. Possibly they belong to an earlier building than the Edwardian castle, but the point is a difficult one. Near the S.E. tower is "Bachelor House," with the inscription "Melius nil coelibis vita".

Inside the house is an ancient oak-chest, said to have belonged to Lord Lovell, and claimed by tradition as the fatal chest in the "Mistletoe Bough" story. There is, however, at least one other chest claiming to be authentic, and the present tradition may only rest on the fact that the Lovells once owned the manor. The house commands a view over a small but beautiful park, which stretches down into a bottom, on the far side of which are the village and church of Rotherfield Greys. The church is restored E.E., but retains a square font, a square low side window and a piscina, all E.E. One of the lancets is original, and there is also a blocked Norman door (plain). In front of the altar is a very fine brass to Robert, fifth and last Lord Grey, d. 1387. On the N. side is the *Knollys Chapel*, built in 1605, of debased Perp., but good for the date. In the centre is a splendid monument to Sir Francis Knollys, erected by his son, Sir William Knollys, who is kneeling in the upper part of the tomb. There are other monuments to the Knollys and the Stapletons.

*Rotherfield Peppard* ( $3\frac{1}{2}$  miles W. of Henley) has a church originally Norman, but very much modernised. There are three small Norman windows in the chancel, traces of a Norman E. end, a Trans. chancel arch, and a font with a Norman bowl. Also there is an E.E. side window. All other ancient features have disappeared.



## OXFORDSHIRE

ROUSHAM (1 mile S. of Heyford Station, 12 miles N. of Oxford) is the seat of the Cottrell-Dormers, who represent two ancient and distinguished families, the Cottrells and the Dormers. The first Sir Clement Cottrell was groom-porter to James I. His son, Sir Charles Cottrell, the best-known member of the family, was page to George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham, and afterwards master of the ceremonies to Charles I. and Charles II. After the Civil War he was in 1652 appointed steward to the Queen of Bohemia at Heidelberg, but left her in 1655 to become secretary to the Duke of Gloucester, Charles I.'s youngest son, who died of small-pox just after the Restoration. After that event Sir Charles resumed his office of master of the ceremonies. He was in high honour with Charles II., and in 1663 was sent as ambassador to Brussels. The office of master of the ceremonies remained in the family for five generations. Sir Charles was succeeded by his second son, Sir Charles Lodowick Cottrell, the eldest son, Clement, having been blown up with Lord Sandwich, in the *Royal James*, during the fight with the Dutch in Southwold Bay, 1672. His last words to a boat which was leaving the ship are said to have been: "Tell my father that you are leaving me in good company". In the next generation Sir Clement Cottrell inherited Rousham from General Dormer, his cousin, and thereupon took the name of Cottrell-Dormer. It will be noticed that the eldest sons are called Charles and Clement alternately.

The house was originally built by Sir Robert Dormer in the reign of James I., but its windows have been modernised. It was restored in the eighteenth century by Kent, who added E. and

## ROUSHAM

W. wings, the latter containing the library which is now the drawing-room. Of the original house the two principal rooms are the hall, and the old drawing-room on the first floor, now used as a bedroom. E. of the house there is a dove-cot dated 1685. To the N. the beautiful grounds, laid out by Kent in the Italian style, slope gradually to the Cherwell. In the centre is a statue of a lion tearing a horse. To the left are hanging woods, among which wind pleasant walks, adorned at intervals with statues brought from Italy. Just above the Cherwell is a curiously solid-looking summer-house of stone. Horace Walpole, who visited the house in 1760, called the garden "Daphne in little," and says, "Nowhere has Kent shown so much taste". He adds: "If I had such a house, such a library, and such a pretty wife, I think I should let King . . . send to Herrenhausen for a master of the ceremonies".

The chief interest of the interior lies in the family portraits, and in the remarkable collection of manuscript letters kept in the library, many of which are of historical importance. The most interesting were collected by Sir Charles Cottrell, when secretary to the Duke of Gloucester, and are from the Duke himself, his sister Mary Princess of Orange, Charles II., the Queen of Bohemia, Lord Clarendon and others. There are two portraits of this Sir Charles, one when he was a young man, by Dobson, the other when he was old, by Kneller. In the latter he is wearing the chain and medal which Charles II. himself flung round his neck, and which is preserved as a family heirloom. The medal has two faces, emblematical the one of peace, the other of war. Among other interesting family

## OXFORDSHIRE

portraits are those of the first Sir Clement Cottrell (Vandyke) ; Clement Cottrell, killed at Southwold Bay ; Sir Julius Caesar Adelmarr (ancestor of the wife of the third Sir Clement Cottrell), who entertained Queen Elizabeth at Mitcham ; Jane Dormer, playmate of Edward VI., and intimate friend of Queen Mary, who became Duchess of Feria by marrying the Spanish ambassador ; Sir Robert Dormer, who built the house ; Robert Dormer, his son, whose marriage with Anne Cottrell united the two families ; General Dormer, his son, who left Rousham to the Cottrells ; the general's brother, Col. Charles Dormer, killed at Almanza in 1707 (these last two were painted when boys) ; and Lady Cottrell-Dormer, the "pretty wife," as Horace Walpole called her, of the third Sir Charles, by Sir Joshua Reynolds. Other portraits are of Queen Elizabeth, James I., Queen Anne, Falkland, and the poets Waller, Dryden and Pope.

The church lies E. of the house. Of the original Trans. building there remain the chancel arch (restored), and the E. bay of the nave arcade. The rest of the church, including the two W. bays of the nave arcade, is Dec., except some inserted Perp. windows, and the inevitable Perp. clerestory. The E. window is new. Note the double Dec. piscina, the window with collected pieces of old glass, and the blocked arch which suggests that there was a N. chapel. The rood-loft stairs communicated with the lofts of both the chancel screen, and of that separating a S. chapel from the nave aisle. The latter still remains, and is good Perp. The monument to Michael Dormer and his wife (1584) was removed here from Stoeple Barton Church. A fine new organ has just been erected.

## ROUSHAM—RYCOTE

RYCOTE (11 miles from Oxford, 1½ E. of Tiddington Station) is a ruined manor, park and chapel, very interesting from its associations with royalty. In the sixteenth century Lord Williams (see *Thame*) acquired the manor by purchase. It descended to his son-in-law, Sir Henry Norris, afterwards created Lord Norreys of Rycote. The estate still remains in the same family, its present owner being the Earl of Abingdon. Lord Williams built here in 1539 a magnificent mansion, where in 1554 he entertained, partly as prisoner, partly as guest, the Princess Elizabeth, whose keeper he had been appointed by Queen Mary. His politic conduct in treating the princess leniently completely gained her goodwill, whereas she always referred to Sir Henry Bedingfield, her other keeper, as "her jailor". She afterwards twice visited Rycote when queen, in 1566 and 1592. Charles I. was also a guest at Rycote, both in 1625, when Parliament met in Oxford because of the plague, and later, during the Civil War, in 1643-1644. The place is now a memorial of vanished greatness, the mansion having been unnecessarily destroyed by the third Earl of Abingdon. It lies hidden among trees to the left of the road leading from the *Three Pigeons* to Thame. It is approached by a rough cart-road and may easily be missed. Of the manor-house there only remain a few fragments, *i.e.*, the stables turned into a farm, and one angle-tower of red brick, while a few scattered trees and an ill-kept sheet of water indicate the former splendour of the surrounding park.

The *chapel* was founded in the middle of the fifteenth century by Richard Quartermayne and Sybil his wife, formerly owners of the manor and

## OXFORDSHIRE

buried in Thame Church (see *Thame*). It has been allowed to fall into utter disrepair, yet the absence of restoration enables us to feel that, apart from the ravages of time, the chapel is exactly as when Charles I. worshipped in it. It is oblong, with W. tower, and of good Perp. throughout. The arches of the side windows are straight-sided, forming at the apex a very obtuse angle. There are three doors. At the E. end, instead of pinnacles, are the figures of two greyhounds. Inside, the barrel-vaulting, the font and piscina are Perp., but the rood-screen has been replaced by two elaborate renaissance pews, obviously intended for one or other of the royal visitors. The S. pew (which is the earliest and may be Elizabethan) is canopied; the N. pew is of two storeys, of which the upper was probably an organ-loft. Both are profusely adorned with carving and frescoes, and their E. side forms a sort of screen. The reredos is also of renaissance work.

*Salford* (2 miles N.W. of Chipping Norton) has a church with some Norman features—*i.e.*, two Norman doors, of which the N. door has the figure of Sagittarius in the tympanum (*cf. Kencot and Hook Norton*), one small window, and the font. Otherwise the church is E.E. with some later inserted windows, but restoration has robbed it of interest. There is an E.E. porch, "with a stone roof carried on an arch" (Parker), a canopied niche in a Perp. window, and a low side window with transom. The village had both a churchyard cross and a wayside cross.

*Sandford St. Martin* (15½ miles N. of Oxford, 4 miles W. of Heyford Station) is a picturesque village in the upper valley of the little *Dorne*, a

## SALFORD—SANDFORD-ON-THAMES

region of fine trees. Its history has been written by the Rev. E. Marshall, the antiquarian, who was rector here for many years. The church is well kept and has some good points, the oldest being the cup-shaped Norman font. The N. arcade is Trans., but rude and not characteristic; the S. arcade is E.E. The chancel was also E.E., but the side walls were rebuilt about 50 years ago; the N. aisle also has been rebuilt. The E. windows, both of chancel and S. aisle, are strange but good examples of Trans. to Perp. Another window in the S. aisle is of the same style, but the others are earlier (Dec.). The aisle also contains some fragments of old glass; a beautiful Dec. piscina with ogee finial, and an hour-glass stand. The S. porch is groined and has an E.E. stoup. The clerestory and tower with W. door are Perp., but the Dec. W. window has been retained. In the churchyard is the vault of Lord Deloraine, d. 1730, third son of the Duke of Monmouth, who had requested that it should remain open to the air, so that his coffin might be seen. This was done until a hard-pressed fox ran to earth here, and a scandalous hunting scene occurred in the churchyard. The village cross has been set up with a new head. Near it is an old house dating from about 1700.

At *Ledwell* (1 mile N.) the fine trees of Lord Deloraine's park may still be seen, but the house has entirely disappeared. *Ledwell House*, formerly the residence of Admiral Sayer, still exists. It was built about the end of the seventeenth century.

*Sandford-on-Thames* (3½ miles S. of Oxford, ½ mile S. of Littlemore Station) is a name well known to boating men. It has little charm, except that which is inseparable from even the tamer

## OXFORDSHIRE

reaches of the beautiful river, and the tall chimney of the paper-mill is too prominent. The lasher has been the scene of more than one bathing accident, one of which the obelisk commemorates. The church was originally early Norman, but restoration and rebuilding have left little of it. There is an original window S. of chancel, with external columns, and two plain doorways. Two foliated lancets may also be E.E. ; otherwise all is modern. S. of the chancel, in a bad light, is a fine piece of carving, representing the Assumption of the Virgin Mary. At Sandford there was a *Preceptory of the Knights Templars*, which afterwards passed to the Knights Hospitallers of St. John. Traces of the ancient building are found in the farm down by the stream, N.W. of the church. A barn seems to be the site of the chapel, and contains a depressed doorway and the remains of two lancet windows, with a string-course below and a deep buttress. There are several old-looking square-headed windows in the house, and a stone with an old coat-of-arms. The house is being rebuilt.

*Sarsden* (4 miles S. of Chipping Norton) lies in the very pretty valley through which the little Sars Brook flows, past a hillside covered with beech-woods, to join the Evenlode. The beauty culminates in Sarsden Park, the seat of Lord Morton, through which it is permissible to ride, and which contains a lovely piece of ornamental water. The house is Jacobean, and retains some old doors and gables, but the windows have been altered. Some out-buildings are considered to be Perp., and to belong to an old manor-house, but there is little distinctive in them. The church is near the house. It was rebuilt in 1760, and has no Gothic features. Just N.W. of

## SARSDEN—SHILTON

the park is the finest and most perfect *wayside cross* in the county, on a pedestal of six steps.

*Shelswell.* (See *Hethe.*)

*Shenington* (6 miles W. of Banbury) forms a twin village with Alkerton, the two places facing each other on opposite sides of the valley of the Upper Sor Brook. The fine church has suffered from "restoration". The splendid Norman chancel arch has been placed N. of the chancel as at Fritwell. The S. arcade is good E.E., with large stiff-stalk foliage in the capitals. On the E. respond heads are intermixed, as at Woodstock. All the windows but two are now late Dec. (though several are really new). The exceptions are the W. window, belonging to a late Perp. tower, and a Perp. window in the S. aisle, near which on the outside is a quaint piece of carving, apparently a saint attended by a cow. Note also Dec. sedile and piscina, the low side window and the rood-stairs.

*Shifford* (about 12 miles W. of Oxford) is a hamlet on the Upper Thames, with a modern church. In 890 a Witan of King Alfred is said to have met here. "There sate at Shifford many thanes, many bishops, wise earls and awful knights; there was Alfred, England's herdsman, England's darling" (*Cottonian MS.*). Some believe the reference is to Great Shefford in Berkshire.

*Shillingford.* (See Warborough.)

*Shilton* (3 miles S.E. of Burford, 3 miles from Alvescot Station) is a pretty stone-built village, nestling in a steep-sided hollow, through which flows the little Shill. The church is interesting. The nave and S. aisle are Norman, with some Perp. alterations. The Norman N. doorway has had a



## OXFORDSHIRE

Perp. door inserted below it. The porch is also Norman. There is a good Norman arcade and one original window, the rest being Perp. (restored). The square font is very fine Norman, with figures in high relief, representing scenes in our Lord's passion. In the S. aisle there is a piscina and a squint. The chancel is entirely late E.E., verging on Dec., and should be compared with those of Northmoor and Piddington. The foliated and recessed lancets, including the low side window, the piscina, and priest's door are still E.E., but the E. window and one other are of distinctly transitional character. The tower is Perp.

*Skiplake* (3 miles S. of Henley) is a village perched on a steep and well-wooded chalk bluff directly overhanging the Thames, over which there are fine views, also over the flat meadows opposite, through which the Loddon runs to join the larger stream a little farther down. The church was the scene of Tennyson's marriage in 1850. Of the lines he afterwards sent to the vicar the last stanza is worth quoting, for it contains the poet's most direct reference to Oxfordshire scenery :—

Sweetly flow your life with Kate's,  
Glancing off from all things evil,  
Smooth as Thames below your gates,—  
Thames along the silent level  
Streaming thro' his osier'd aits.

Since then the church has been rebuilt and looks distressingly new. In the S. aisle alone some old work remains, an E. window and piscina which are E.E. ; a geometrical W. window, and one ancient pillar, which shows grotesque heads and is apparently early Dec. There is a brass to John Symonds, 1520,



THE THAMES NEAR SHIPLAKE



## SHIPTON-UNDER-WYCHWOOD

and a monument to Andrew Blunden, 1607. Several windows are filled with beautiful old French glass, brought over from St. Omer at the time of the Revolution.

*Shipton-on-Cherwell* (6½ miles N. of Oxford, 1½ miles N. of Kidlington Station) has a small church rebuilt in 1831. There is a churchyard cross, an old round font, and a sepulchral recess with an old stone coffin.

**SHIPTON-UNDER-WYCHWOOD** (19 miles from Oxford ; station on G.W.R.) is on the Evenlode, about half-way between Chipping Norton and Burford. For a small place it is well-off for antiquities. The large and beautiful church is E.E., with considerable Perp. alterations. The only part showing earlier features is the W. end, which has a fine late Trans. door flanked by two round-headed little windows (one blocked). The graceful tower and spire, which rise above, are pure E.E., and of a type fairly common in South-West Oxfordshire. They resemble the Cathedral tower and spire, in a tendency to dumpiness among other points. The interior is made very attractive by the numerous E.E. arches and columns. One interesting feature is the carrying of cross arches over the N. aisle, which rest on good E.E. shafts. The aisles are prolonged to form chapels at the E. end. The S. chapel, which contains monuments of the Reade family, is the only part which has kept its E.E. windows (late). All the others are now Perp. Other Perp. alterations are the clerestory, the vestry door, and the S. door and porch. The latter is groined and has a newel staircase running to a parvise, in front of which are two niches with good carved figures. The stone pulpit and font

## OXFORDSHIRE

are also good Perp. Note the bear and ragged staff on one of the font panels. The absence of Dec. work in the church is notable. The E. window is modern, and the Dec. sedilia and piscina restorations. There are two Dec. tomb-recesses in the N. wall, under one of which is a broken effigy. There is a strange Tudor monument in the chancel, also a brass plate with inscriptions on both sides, the later dated 1548.

E. and N.E. of the church are some old ecclesiastical buildings, which group finely with the church when viewed from the Evenlode bridge. They date from the time when the church was attached as a prebend to Salisbury Cathedral. Facing E. are "the remains of the prebendary chapel, demolished in 1900," as an inscription states. They consist of two moulded doors, and two one-light Perp. windows. The barn behind them has ornamented gables and looks like a tithe-barn. The Prebendary itself is the old-looking house E. of the church. The *Crown Inn*, in the middle of the village, has a fine Tudor gateway, at least one Tudor window, and an open timber roof in an upper room. A little S.W. on the Burford road, is *Shipton Court*, a beautiful Elizabethan house, with a front of five projecting gables, each showing a good mullioned window. It was built in 1603, and bought by Sir Compton Reade in 1633. The garden, avenue and ornamental water are lovely.

About 2 miles N.E., on the Chipping Norton road, are *Lyneham Barrows*, some ancient tumuli. A little farther is a monolith, about 6 feet high, and still farther, on the crest of the hill, a fine prehistoric camp. All are left of the road.

SHIRBURN CASTLE (15 miles S.E. of Oxford,

## SHIRBURN CASTLE—SHORTHAMPTON

1½ miles N. of Watlington) is the seat of the Earl of Macclesfield. The castle has had a long history and has passed through many hands. Originally one of those built by Robert D'Oilly, it was surrendered to the Empress Maud in 1141, and was in 1321 the scene of a meeting of the barons under Thomas, Earl of Lancaster, to put down the power of the Despensers. The present castle was built in 1377 by Warine de l'Isle. It was held for the king in the Civil War, and taken by Fairfax about 18th May, 1646. The buildings stand in a splendid park full of fine elms, evergreen oaks, and other trees, and are surrounded on all sides by a wide and deep moat, over which are thrown draw-bridges. The castle is square in shape, with battlemented exterior and a round tower at each angle, rising straight from the water. Unfortunately the rough-cast coating and the modern windows go far to spoil the effect. The interior (*shown in absence of the family*) contains an armoury, two important libraries, and some good historical portraits, including Erasmus by Holbein, Laud by Vandyke, and Catherine Parr.

The church lies near the castle. It has been badly treated and is not easy to read. The arcades are either Trans. or rude E.E. ; all the windows are Dec. The tower was originally Norman, but has been altered, and a debased top storey has been added. Note a curious low side window, a Norman tympanum built into the W. wall, a broken piscina, and two brasses.

*Shorthampton* (17 miles N.W. of Oxford, 2 miles N.W. of Charlbury Station) has a tiny church with a quaint bell-cot, and little bits of all styles, *i.e.*, one Norman window, an E.E. chancel arch,

## OXFORDSHIRE

late Dec. low side window, and three Perp. windows. There is a large squint and a plain font, perhaps Norman. The late restoration has revealed some curious frescoes.

*Shotover* (3 miles E. of Oxford) is a prominent hill rising from the Headington Plateau. Geologically it is of much interest, various strata being piled on the top of each other till they are finally capped by an isolated patch of the Hastings sand. At the foot are the Headington quarries in the "coral-rag," the stone from which has been only too familiar in Oxford, since it weathers black and peels away in large flakes. The top is a wild region of gorse and heather, with extensive views reaching to the Chilterns and the Berkshire downs, and a distant view of Oxford<sup>1</sup> itself, formerly the first glimpse travellers obtained of the city, when—strange as it now appears to us—the main road from London ran right over the summit. At the top of the steep W. slope there is still an old mounting-stone, once used by horsemen who had dismounted for the hill. In still earlier times there was an extensive royal forest here, with hunting-lodge and rangers, one of whom is said to have been grandfather of the poet Milton. The forest bounds came very close to the city, and there is a celebrated tradition that a student, while quietly reading his Aristotle on Headington Hill, was attacked by a wild boar, and escaped by ramming the book down the animal's throat, with the cry "*Græcum est*". This is the legendary origin of the Boar's Head ceremony at Queen's College.

<sup>1</sup> This view of Oxford, also those from Elsfield and Stow Wood, are best seen in the morning; those from Hinksey and Boar's Hill in the afternoon. To get the proper light on the spires makes all the difference.

## SHOTOVER—SOMERTON

When Shelley was an undergraduate he loved to wander about Shotover, a favourite amusement of his being to throw stones into a quarry-pond at the foot of the hill.

*Shutford* (4½ miles W. of Banbury) is a village resting under the shadow of Barton Hill and Jester's Hill, two of the strange row of hills of which Epwell Hill is the highest. The village is dominated by the old manor-house, which has three storeys with heavy mullioned windows, and a tall tower containing a well staircase of oak, and quite overshadowing the smaller church tower. The staircase ascends to the *long room*, 80 feet in length, where Lord Saye and Sele (see *Broughton*) is said to have drilled soldiers secretly before the Civil War. The church has a Trans. N. arcade and font, and an E.E. chapel (N.) with a curious squint. The chancel was probably also E.E. originally, but nearly all windows in the chancel and nave are Dec. or Perp. insertions. There is a low Perp. tower at N.W. angle, and a fine Perp. screen of black oak.

*Sibford* (7 miles W. of Banbury) is the name of twin villages, Sibford Gower and Sibford Ferris, which face each other on opposite sides of a steep ravine. The church is modern. The villages are the only ones in the county which belong to the river-basin of the Warwickshire Avon.

SOMERTON (15 miles N. of Oxford; station on G.W.R.) is a village pleasantly situated on the left bank of the Cherwell. On the E. of the parish can be traced the Avesditch, a curious boundary or line of defence belonging to very ancient times. A castle built here in Stephen's reign has entirely disappeared. On the hillside E. of the village is "the Park," where the ground has been much cut



## OXFORDSHIRE

up into terraces and ramparts. These mark the site of the great Tudor mansion of the Fermors, an important Roman Catholic family, three generations of whom lived here in the sixteenth century. After this the family migrated to Tusmore (*q.v.*), and the house was presently carted away wholesale. One gable-end is left standing with the ruins of a beautiful Tudor window, which probably belonged to the large dining-hall. Below is the church, which is structurally somewhat rude and featureless, but contains some objects of much interest. The oldest part is a fragment of the S. wall at the W. end of the nave, which is early Norman, and has a blocked plain Norman door. When the nave was rebuilt in the Trans. style, the S. aisle was not finished, and this fragment of wall was left. Both the arcades and the chancel arch are Trans., but they have little distinctive character, and some authorities prefer to consider them E.E. The chancel was rebuilt in the Dec. period. The tower is very late Dec. with Perp. battlements. The clerestory and most of the nave windows are Perp. Finally in the sixteenth century William Fermor turned the S. aisle into the Fermor chantry. The plain round arch leading into the chancel is supposed to have been cut by him at this time, but it is a strange feature. In the chancel notice: (1) the beautiful Dec. sedilia; (2) the pretty Dec. window, prolonged to serve as a low side window, with a seat below it; (3) the good Perp. rood-screen and another screen leading into the Fermor chapel; (4) the ancient Dec. stone reredos representing the Last Supper. All the Apostles are eating and drinking, and St. John is lying on our Lord's breast with his head much below the others. On the outside of the tower is

## SOMERTON—SOULDERN

a "Calvary," perhaps by the same hand, our Lord on the Cross being attended by the Virgin Mary and St. John. The Fermor tombs are an unusually complete series, and demand attention, especially the altar-tomb with brasses to William Fermor, 1552, and the alabaster tomb with recumbent figures to Thomas Fermor, 1580. In the churchyard are the steps and shaft of a cross. At *Troy Farm*, an old house about  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles E. on the road, there is a garden containing a turf maze, *i.e.*, a series of winding grass paths,  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile in total length, with furrows between. Such mazes were called *Troys* or *Troy Towns*, for a reason which can be gathered from Vergil, *Æneid*, v., 580-602.

*Souldern* (18 miles N. of Oxford, about 3 miles from Aynho Station) is a living once held by Robert Jones, the friend of Wordsworth, who here wrote his sonnet "On a parsonage in Oxfordshire," beginning:—

Where holy ground begins, unhallowed ends,  
Is marked by no distinguishable line,  
The turf unites, the pathways intertwine.

There is now a new rectory, with a particularly solid wall between garden and churchyard, so that the old association has been ruthlessly sacrificed. The church is very mixed in style. There is a very old and beautiful Norman tower, the belfry window being of two lights, with the dividing baluster. The font and N. door are also Norman. The S. arcade is good Trans., the chancel arch E.E., the nave and aisle windows with S. door late Dec. The S. windows are good, and there is also a piscina. The exterior cornice was added by Rickman. The chancel is modern. There are three brasses:

## OXFORDSHIRE

(1) Thomas Warner, 1514; (2) John Throckmorton, 1537, with hands supporting a heart and scrolls; (3) a girl, without date. The Throckmortons once lived in the manor-house. This still exists as rebuilt in the seventeenth century, but with its windows altered.

*Spelsbury* (16 miles N.W. of Oxford, 2 miles N. of Charlbury Station) is a village in the Evenlode Valley. The existing church is part of a larger one, possibly cruciform, portions of which were taken down in the eighteenth century. At present the old Norman tower (partly rebuilt) is at the W. end, and the E.E. arches which opened from it N. and S. into transepts or aisles are blocked. The nave has E.E. arcades, but the clerestory and aisle windows are Perp. The chancel appears to be modern; it is at least rebuilt. The W. door and window are Dec. Since this is the parish church of Ditchley many illustrious members of the Lee-Dillon family are buried here. The two most interesting monuments are those of Sir Henry Lee, d. 1631—not the knight of Ditchley who was buried at Quarendon, Bucks, but his cousin and successor, the second bearer of the name (see *Ditchley*)—and of his descendant, Sir Edward Henry Lee, first Earl of Litchfield, who married Charlotte Fitzroy, daughter of Charles II. and the Duchess of Cleveland, and died 1716. The Wilmots, father and son (see *Adderbury* and *Woodstock*), are also buried here, but have no monuments. About one mile N.E. is the hamlet of *Taston*, where there is a ruined wayside cross, and close to it by the roadside an upright monolith, about 7 feet high, called the Thor Stone.

*Stadhampton* (7½ miles S.E. of Oxford) has a

## SPELSBURY—STANTON HARCOURT

church without interest. The N. aisle is late Perp., the rest is debased and tower modern. There is a brass dated 1508.

STANDLAKE (9 miles W. of Oxford) is a long straggling village on the Windrush. The cruciform church is very fine. There are some indications of an original Norman or Trans. building. Not only is there a round-headed door N. of the chancel, but also the chancel arch, the arch leading into the S. transept, and the nearest arch to it in the nave seem earlier in style than the other arches, and may perhaps be considered Trans. Otherwise the church is almost entirely E.E. The chancel is earlier than the nave, which is a good example of developed E.E. (about 1250-1260). It has two arcades, one with round, the other with octagonal pillars, and lancet triplets with the spandrils pierced. The S. door has been restored. There are several later inserted windows, two geometrical and a Perp. (blocked) S. of chancel; a curvilinear one, also blocked, N. of chancel; an intersecting one with interior foliation S. of S. transept, and a Trans. to Perp. one N. of the N. transept. East of both transepts are blocked E.E. arches, which formerly led into chapels. The nave clerestory and roof are Perp. At the W. end is a curious octagonal tower with spire (early Dec.). S. of the chancel outside is an E.E. recess. There is an Elizabethan rectory.

About one mile N. of the church a *British Village* was discovered in 1857. Nothing is now to be seen on the site, but a plan of the village with some of the objects found may be seen in the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford.

STANTON HARCOURT is a most interest-

## OXFORDSHIRE

ing village 6 miles due W. of Oxford. It can be reached by cycle from Oxford: (1) by Cumnor, Eaton, and Bablockhythe Ferry (a bad road)—7½ miles; (2) by Eynsham—9 miles. It is 2 miles S. of the nearest station, South Leigh. According to local tradition its name is thus explained. During a certain battle in the neighbourhood, at an age not specified, the general called out to a captain of his named Harcourt, "Stan' to 'un, Harcourt! Stan' to 'un, Harcourt!" who, thus encouraged, performed prodigies of valour, and gained the place its name. The author of this amusing story does not seem to have "forged his indentures" by inventing either the date of the battle or the general's name. Obviously the place is so named as the ancestral seat of the Harcourts, who have held the manor here ever since the twelfth century. After 1711, when the family migrated to Nuneham Courtney, the manor-house fell into disrepair, and was finally taken down in 1780. The existing remains, however, are very interesting, and comprise the gate-house, the so-called Pope's tower, and the kitchen. *Tickets to see them can be obtained at the Gate-house (3d. each).* (1) The *Gate-house* is late Tudor, much later than the other buildings, which are fifteenth century. Note the Harcourt arms over the gate, and the heraldic devices on either side; (2) Pope's Tower is built over the *chapel*, which has a vaulted stone roof, and is entered by a somewhat longer ante-chapel with a flat wooden roof. Both roofs are ornamented with blue and gilt colouring. Above the ante-chapel is a room called "the congregation room," from which there is a squint into the chapel (now blocked). Above the chapel is the tower of three stages, reached by



STANTON HARCOURT



## STANTON HARCOURT

a newel staircase. The rooms are 13 feet square. The first is the priest's room, above which is the priest's bedroom, and topmost of all is *Pope's Study*, which is panelled and has later windows than the others in the tower, which are Perp. Here Pope was a visitor in 1717-1718, a solitary guest when the house was already falling into ruins, and here on a red pane of glass he wrote the inscription now kept at Nuneham Courtney :—

In the year 1718  
ALEXANDER POPE  
finish'd here the  
fifth volume of HOMER.<sup>1</sup>

From the leads there is a good view. The immediate surroundings, though flat, are well wooded, and Eynsham and Cumnor hills rise effectively beyond them, with the distant towers of Oxford showing in the gap between. (3) The *kitchen* is a square tower with an octagonal top, squinched in the four corners, and surmounted by a conical tiled roof, above which is a griffin supporting the weathercock. Inside, note the great ovens and the position of the fireplaces. The walls are grimed with the smoke of centuries, for there are no chimneys, and the smoke escaped from openings in the lantern called *louvres*, which were regulated according to the direction of the wind, being opened and shut from a passage which runs round the roof level with the battlements, and which is reached by a newel staircase in a side turret. The whole building much resembles the Glastonbury kitchen, otherwise it is unique. Pope, in a letter to the Duke of Buckingham, full of

<sup>1</sup> Not the fifth *Book*, as it is sometimes erroneously stated. Pope was translating the *Iliad* in six volumes.



## OXFORDSHIRE

humorous banter about the ruinous and ghost-haunted condition of the buildings, is especially facetious about the kitchen: "The horror of it," he says, "has made such an impression upon the country people that they believe the witches keep their Sabbath here, and that once a year the devil treats them with infernal venison, *i.e.*, a toasted tiger stuffed with tenpenny nails". The gardens are still nicely kept, and there is a fishpond S.E. of the church, from the far side of which the three towers, the church, Pope's tower, and the kitchen, group well.

The fine cruciform church with central tower is almost in a line with Pope's tower and the kitchen. To the original Norman church belong the nave, the lower storey of the tower (outside), and one blocked doorway in the chancel. The chancel, the transepts and the pillars and arches of the tower were rebuilt in E.E. style. Later, a good Dec. roof was added to the nave, Perp. windows were inserted at the N., S. and W. ends, and a Perp. storey was added to the tower. Finally, the Harcourt chapel, in the Tudor style, was built S. of the chancel. The Norman door and windows in the nave are good but plain. There is a stoup inside the N. door. N. of the nave is an E.E. arch (now blocked by a Perp. window) which used to lead to a vanished chapel. The E.E. work has much graceful detail, especially at the E. ends of the N. transept and of the chancel. The vaulting under the tower is only plaster, and is modern. The chancel screen is E.E., and one of the earliest in England, perhaps the earliest. The small holes in the lower part are of the nature of squints. There is a large E.E. pillar-piscina in the

## STANTON ST. JOHN

chancel, and opposite it on the N. side a beautiful canopied altar-tomb, of rich Dec. work, perhaps used as an Easter sepulchre. Near it is the tomb of Maud, wife of Sir Thomas Harcourt, d. 1394. On the floor of the chancel are two small sixteenth century brasses. The Harcourt Chapel contains the family monuments, the most striking among which is that of Sir Robert Harcourt and Margaret his wife, 1471, both of whom wear the Order of the Garter. There are only three ladies whose effigies are known to wear this decoration.

Outside, on the S. is a memorial stone to two rustic lovers who were killed by lightning during Pope's stay in the village, 1718. The incident greatly affected the poet, and the oft-quoted epitaph is his composition.

In the village the old stocks are to be seen. Some distance S. are three large prehistoric upright stones, called the *Devil's Quits*, which stand in the fields quite 200 yards apart from each other, the first two due S. of the village, the third rather more to the S.E. They are of a conglomerate rock, and are roughly about 4½ feet, 8 feet, and 10 feet in height respectively. They have been supposed to commemorate a Saxon victory, but this is no more likely to be true than the legend that they were thrown by the devil when playing quoits with a beggar for his soul.

STANTON ST. JOHN (4½ miles E. of Oxford) is interesting as the home of Milton's grandfather, said to have been "under-ranger of Shotover Forest" (see also *Milton* and *Forest Hill*). The name is derived from the St. Johns of Lugeham, Surrey, who once owned the manor. Since the dissolution of the monasteries, church and manor-

## OXFORDSHIRE :

house have been in the possession of New College. The church is very interesting. Of the original Trans. building there remain only the N. arcade and chancel arch. The chancel was beautifully rebuilt in early geometrical style, and the S. aisle, with arcade and clerestory, is rather later Dec. Most of the S. aisle windows have been altered to Perp. Finally, in Perp. times the N. aisle was rebuilt, retaining one Dec. window. The tradition is that at this time the aisle was given to the inhabitants of Woodperry, whose church and village had been destroyed by fire. The W. tower is also Perp. Many of the details are very beautiful. The E. window is an unusual geometrical pattern, the tracery consisting of foliated lozenges, formed by intersecting straight lines. The side windows of the chancel are foliated lancets, recessed beneath arches with delicately moulded corbel-heads, and containing some interesting old glass. There is a piscina (S.), and an Easter sepulchre or founder's tomb (N.), under a rich Dec. canopy. The panelled and coloured roof is later. In the nave there are benches with singular carved "poppy-heads". Many consist of *human* heads, two on each standard. The S. aisle has a piscina. At the E. end of the N. aisle is a chantry, surrounded with beautiful screen work. It contains an aumbry and two singular piscinæ, one of which is like a piece of a stone spout.

*Stoke, North*, is on the Thames (2½ miles S. of Wallingford). The church is small but good. The chancel is graceful E.E., the side lancets showing Purbeck marble columns. The square abaci indicate that the work is very early. Unfortunately the E. end has been altered and spoilt.

## STOKE, NORTH—STOKE ROW

The lower part of the tower is also E.E. with a fine arch, but the upper part has been rebuilt. The nave is Dec., simple but good, with traces of frescoes. Outside the S. door is a Dec. stone dial, held up by the figure of a man (compare *Langford*). There are two low side windows, two piscinæ, an E.E. font, and a Jacobean pulpit.

*Stoke, South* (2 miles N. of Goring Station), is also on the Thames, about 2 miles S. of North Stoke. The church was originally E.E., largely altered in the Dec. period, and with an early Perp. tower. Restoration has impaired its interest. The chancel arch is early Dec., with a later Dec. niche on either side. The E. window, which shows well from the railway, is Trans. to Perp., but really of a heavy type. Dr. Griffith Higga, chaplain to the Queen of Bohemia, d. 1659, is buried in the church.

*Stoke Lyne* (4 miles N.W. of Bicester) has an interesting Norman church. The original parts are the chancel with three side windows, door and fine chancel arch (the E. end is restored), and the S. door which has above it a niche with figure of St. Peter. Some early lancets (of Trans. character) have been inserted, two in the nave and two in the chancel—one being a low side window. The aisles rather resemble chapels. The N. aisle is modern, except the E. wall, which contains a Dec. window and a piscina; the S. aisle is Dec., with the Dec. tower built over it, to which restoration has lately given an incongruous Norman top. There is a brass to Edward Love and his wife, 1535, and a tablet to Wm. Holt and wife, 1582.

*Stoke Row* (about 20 miles S.E. of Oxford, 5½ miles W. of Henley), a village among the Chilterns,

## OXFORDSHIRE

has a modern church. Here is the *Maharajah's Well*, 368 feet deep. It is surmounted by an Oriental cupola, on which is written: "His Highness the Maharajah of Benares, India, gave this well (1864)". The Rajah, when talking with Mr. E. A. Reade of Ipsden House, who was conducting some engineering works for him, had been informed of the great difficulty of obtaining water in the chalk country of the Chilterna, and promised to remedy it.

*Stoke Talmage* (13½ miles E. of Oxford) is a prettily situated village. The church has no genuine ancient feature, except two brasses dated 1504 and 1589.

*Stonesfield* (12 miles N.W. of Oxford, 3 miles S.E. of Charlbury Station), a village whose industry is stone-quarrying, is perched on a bleak height above the Evenlode Valley. It is a place famous for fossils. Akeman Street, the Roman road, passes close by, and two Roman villas have been discovered in the neighbourhood. Besides the existing one (see *North Leigh*) another was discovered in 1772, but has now entirely disappeared. The church is E.E., but the windows are chiefly later insertions (mostly Dec.), and the N. aisle with arcade, the clerestory and the S. porch are modern. Very fine E.E. work is shown: (1) in the chancel arch; (2) in the clustered columns of the S. arcade; (3) in the windows of the N.E. chapel. One of these has been changed to Dec., but the interior mouldings and shaft remain. The tower is E.E. with a Perp. upper storey. There are two Dec. piscinæ and a Jacobean pulpit.

*STONOR PARK* (4 miles N. of Henley) is the seat of Lord Camoys. The title is the revival of

## STOKE TALMAGE—STUDLEY PRIORY

an ancient fifteenth century one, the first Baron Camoys having led the left wing at Agincourt. The house, which is Tudor and of brick, lies on an eminence among the Chilterns, surrounded by a well-wooded park. Near it is an ancient Roman Catholic chapel, interesting because of the rarity of such survivals, but completely modernised. The priests' hiding places recall the fate of Edmund Campion, the Jesuit, who lay safe in Stonor for a while in 1580, and even set up a secret press here, but was arrested the next year when celebrating mass at Lyford (Berks), and was executed.

*Stow Wood* (5 miles N.E. of Oxford) is a remnant of one of the great woods of Oxfordshire. It lies on high ground, and from the road near it there is a fine distant view of Oxford. It is strictly preserved.

*Stratton Audley* (3 miles N.E. of Bicester) contains the kennels of the Bicester Hunt. The Audleys, from whom the name is derived, built a castle here, of which the foundations and moat can be clearly traced in a meadow S.E. of the church. The spacious church is mostly Perp. Of earlier styles it retains two lancets in the vestry (at N.W. corner), two early Dec. windows, and the N. arcade, which has good clustered columns, and is late E.E. or early Dec.<sup>1</sup> There is also a Dec. niche for the sanctus bell. The Perp. N. porch is fine, and contains a stoup. The pulpit is Jacobean. The heavy monument is to Sir John Borlase, 1688, whose family held the manor subsequently to the Audleys.

*Studley Priory* (6½ miles N.E. of Oxford) is in

<sup>1</sup> It looks very like the E.E. arcade at Bicester, but authorities consider that it is Dec.

## OXFORDSHIRE

the parish of Horton, where a modern chapel has been erected. Here a Benedictine Nunnery was founded by Bernard St. Walery. At the Dissolution it was given to John Croke, whose family held the estate for many generations. Its most celebrated member was Sir George Croke, the judge who consistently refused to declare ship-money legal. He largely rebuilt the priory, turning the old refectory into a chapel, and also built some picturesque almshouses in 1639. The chapel has again been turned to secular uses. The building as existing is a fine Jacobean house, with square mullioned windows and gables. Over the principal entrance are four shields showing the connections of the Croke family. The house (which is not shown) is picturesque and well situated, commanding fine views over Otmoor.

SWALCLIFFE (5½ miles S.W. of Banbury) is on the Swale Brook, an affluent of the Sor. There are several prehistoric camps in the neighbourhood, of which the most striking is on Madmarston Hill, across the valley. The manor was one among those once belonging to William of Wykeham, and he built here, as at Adderbury and Upper Heyford, a tithe barn still standing. It is W. of the church, and has two large arched doorways on the E. side. The church is large and effective. The peculiar arrangement of the nave arcades may possibly be explained as follows. Originally the church was Saxon, and was probably rectangular, the chancel being what is now the E. bay of the nave, which is larger than the rest and not uniform in style. Two of the original Saxon windows still exist in the wall above the nave arcades. In Norman times the N. aisle and arcade were built. Somewhat

## SWALCLIFFE—SWERFORD

later, the S. aisle and arcade were added in the Trans. style, and at the same time the N. wall of the Saxon chancel was broken through, and the existing arch built. Finally when the style of the S. aisle was changed to somewhat developed E.E., the S. wall was broken through by an arch of the same style. Subsequent changes in the church were: (1) the building or rebuilding of the chancel in geometrical style; (2) the alteration of the N. aisle to late Dec.; (3) the addition of a Perp. clerestory, and two Perp. storeys to the E.E. tower. All the details are good. The Norman and Trans. arches are massive and dignified. In the S. aisle the lancets are grouped in triplets. Below one of them are two Trans. recesses under round arches, which belong to the original form of the aisle. The piscina in the aisle is half-blocked by a huge altar-tomb. The S. door and porch are good E.E. The E. window of the S. aisle is contemporaneous with the chancel windows, which are extremely beautiful. Some have pure geometrical patterns, others have intersecting tracery, and two, including the E. window, show an effective combination of the two styles. The sedilia, piscina and priest's door are all good early Dec. There is a squint, low side window, and a gilded Perp. screen. All the windows in the N. aisle have good flowing tracery. There are some late monuments and brasses, chiefly to the Wykeham family. Outside, notice the turret in which the rood-stairs are carried, the sanctus bell niche (Dec.), and the external recess (S. aisle) with zigzag ornament.

*Swerford* (8½ miles S.W. of Banbury) is romantically situated in the Swere Valley, here narrow and well wooded with steep banks. The church is



## OXFORDSHIRE

small and restored. Originally Dec., it now shows mainly Perp. features. The S. door and porch and the font are good Dec., and there is a strange low side window. The N. aisle is modern. There is an E.E. spire, a smaller edition of those prevalent in the S.W. part of the county. Below the church are the foundations of a castle of which nothing is known.

*Swinbrook* (17½ miles W. of Oxford, 2½ miles E. of Burford), on the Windrush, was the home of the Fettiplaces, a rich and powerful family which owned land in fifteen counties, and in the fifteenth century allied itself by marriage with the royal house of Portugal. After the death of the last Fettiplace, in 1805, the estate was broken up, and now not a stone remains of the great family mansion, which stood between the church and the river. The monuments in the church are the only memorials of this vanished greatness. N. of the chancel are effigies of six Fettiplaces "lying on shelves" (to quote Rickman's phrase). The first three are dated 1504, 1562 and 1613; the other three seem by their dress to belong to the reigns of Charles I., Charles II. and William III. respectively. There is also a brass dated 1510, and other monuments to the family. Another brass dated 1470 is to John Croston. Rickman has left some notes on the church, but not a full description. The earliest parts are the N. arcade and chancel arch (late Trans.); the S. arcade (E.E.) is a little later. Most of the windows are of little interest. Two in the N. aisle are Trans. to Perp., and show the ball-flower externally. The large Perp. E. window has a little old glass. The W. tower stands on two external piers, with an open arch between, a singular

## SWINBROOK—TACKLEY

but clumsy arrangement. The oak stalls with misereres came originally from Burford.

*Swyncombe* (16½ miles S.E. of Oxford, 4 miles S. of Watlington Station) is a hamlet lying in a combe high up under the shoulder of one of the characteristic long ridges which the Chilterns send down to the plain. There was once a monastery here, but no trace remains of it, and the manor-house is modern. The small church is good early Norman, but is somewhat dingy and not well restored. It ends in an effective apse (rebuilt) with three small windows, of which one at least is original. The chancel has a lancet window inserted N., and a Dec. window S. The nave has three plain Norman doors, but the windows are inserted lancets. Font and aumbry are original. Under the W. window is placed a broken pillar-piscina, and an old bell with the inscription, "*Hujus campanæ nomen est Jhesu speciale*".

*Sydenham* (3 miles S. of Thame) is a pretty out-of-the-way village. The church is restored E.E., with a central wooden tower and spire. It has an E.E. font, a stoup, a piscina and a foliated niche.

*Tackley* (9½ miles N. of Oxford, about 2 miles N. of Kirtlington Station) is a pleasant village, on ground sloping to the Cherwell Valley. The cruciform church is mainly E.E. Traces of an older Norman church are to be seen in the N. wall of nave, which contains the arches of a blocked arcade, and a round-headed door below. The principal E.E. parts are the S. arcade, apparently pierced through the old Norman wall, the piers and arches of the central tower, and the chancel, which has a good lancet triplet at the E. end. The W. window is the only Dec. feature. The transepts

## OXFORDSHIRE

are Perp., and the clerestory, upper part of the tower, and all the windows S. of the church are also Perp. alterations. The N. transept window is early Perp. of a strange geometrical character.<sup>1</sup> S. of chancel there are a pillar-piscina and low side window (both Perp.). N. of chancel are three recessed E.E. arches, under which has been placed a fine Perp. tomb. It is too early in style to be that of Peter Aileworth, d. 1595, an inscription to whom is close beside it. The Aileworths were succeeded as lords of the manor by the Harbornes, who built a manor-house of which there are some remains.

*Tadmarton* (5 miles S.W. of Banbury) has a church with a complicated history. Of the original Norman building there remains the N. arcade, some blocked arches in the chancel (N.), and the frame of a low side window opposite, into which a lancet has been subsequently inserted. In E.E. times both nave and chancel were largely rebuilt. This is shown by the chancel arch, and the frames of the windows. The lower part of the tower and the beautiful N. door are also E.E. In the Dec. period the only structural change was the insertion of windows in the N. aisle. But to this date also belong the remarkable font, with its row of grotesque heads, the sanctus bell niche, the only piscina in the church (S. of chancel arch), and the finely carved old pews. Finally the Perp. windows were inserted in the E.E. frames. Those in the chancel are the earliest, being really Trans. to Perp. The clerestory and the top part of tower are also Perp. The rood-stairs are nearly complete.

<sup>1</sup> Similar windows may be seen at St. Bartholomew's Chapel (Cowley), Ambrosden, and Cuddesdon (W. window).

## TADMARTON—TAYNTON

On *Tadmarton Heath* (S. of village) the road cuts through a large prehistoric camp, and about  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile E. of it is "Holy Well," a spring which gushes out in full volume from near the roots of an old ash-tree.

*Tangley Hall* (about 4 miles E. of Shipton-under-Wychwood) is a romantic old Jacobean house, now used as a farm, nestling in a lonely and beautiful valley, just W. of the Burford and Stow road. On one side is a terraced garden with a broad flight of steps, on the other the Nuns' Well, over which is built a substantial house with a stone roof. Inside is a pane of glass with the royal arms. The old oak door with the sliding panel in the centre has a story attached to it. The house was once attacked by a gang of robbers, who were unaware that the inhabitants, being forewarned, had imported a band of constables. One of the robbers put his arm through the panel to draw the bolt, and was immediately seized by two constables. Knowing his case to be desperate, he cried to his comrades, "Cut; cut!" and they at once cut off his arm, and all got away, leaving only the arm behind.

*Taston.* (See Spelsbury.)

*Taynton* (2 miles N.W. of Burford) is on the Windrush, close to where it enters Oxfordshire. The church has an E.E. chancel (restored), with a good lancet triplet and piscina. The nave and its aisles are very late Dec. The only Perp. additions are two windows (S.), the clerestory and the tower. The remarkably late use of the ball-flower is characteristic of many churches in the neighbourhood.<sup>1</sup> It is found here as an exterior cornice, round one

<sup>1</sup> See Coggs, Ducklington, Swinbrook, and Witney.

## OXFORDSHIRE

of the doors, on a pillar, and round a fine large niche (N.E. of nave). Note also the flamboyant character of one of the windows, and the four-leaved flower round the S. door (outside). The remarkable font is early Perp. The rood-stairs are perfect.

*Tetsworth* (12 miles E. of Oxford) has a rebuilt church retaining a Norman door (S.).

GREAT TEW (17½ miles N.W. of Oxford, 6 miles E. of Chipping Norton, 7 miles N. of Charlbury) is the most beautiful and interesting village in North Oxfordshire. It lies in the upper part of a narrow valley, marking the junction between the oolite and lias strata, and into which the hills descend steeply for a drop of quite 200 feet. Through this lovely valley there flows a small tributary to the Cherwell, to which maps assign no name. Just at the point where trees of all kinds grow thickest and tallest, the village descends the S. hillside in a long straggling line, with thatched cottages well built of stone, which about half-way cluster a little more thickly round the Falkland Arms and the old village stocks. At the top are the church and manor-house. Perhaps the *total ensemble* is too suggestive of the "model village," but this is hypercritical. The general effect was much improved about a century ago by John Loudon, the landscape gardener, who planted the numerous evergreens which give to the village so park-like an appearance.

The place seems haunted by the gentle shades of Lucius Cary, Lord Falkland, and his wife Lettice, who came here when newly wed in 1631, and made it a home of peace in a troubled time till separated by death, the husband being killed at



A BIT OF GREAT TEW



## TETSWORTH—GREAT TEW

Newbury in September, 1643, while his widow only survived him for two years and a half. Falkland inherited the estate from his maternal grandfather, Sir Lawrence Tanfield, Chief Baron of the Exchequer (see also *Burford*), whose ghost is still said to drive in a coach-and-six round a great elm in the park. The house, where Falkland entertained such guests as Edward Hyde, Ben Jonson, Waller and Cowley, was destroyed in 1790, when a new one was erected on a different site; but the beautiful gardens above the house still remain, enclosed by red-brick walls, in which are wide arches, now blocked, and with a flagged pavement running straight through all three gardens. Just above is a laurel walk, entered from the road by a picturesque old gateway, and leading to the church, which is completely hidden among trees. Though hardly in the first rank of Oxfordshire churches, it is full of interest. The oldest part faces us at the entrance. There is a Norman door, to which a later hand has strangely added Dec. foliations; and an E.E. porch with a curiously rude arcade on the W. side. The church, when entered, is seen to be mainly of one style, early Dec. The nave arcades belong to this style, though differing but little in details from E.E. The tracery of most of the windows fixes their date pretty decidedly at about 1290-1310. The earliest part of the church to be rebuilt in Dec. style was probably the N. aisle. Perp. additions are the poor E. window, one other window in N. aisle, the clerestory, and the upper part of the tower, which is slightly squinched and is of a massive, handsome type. There is a good Perp. font, and two mutilated piscinæ in the aisles. The rood-stairs were in the S. aisle, showing that



## OXFORDSHIRE

the rood-screen must have stretched across the whole church (as at Handborough). Note also the carved Perp. pews, the linen pattern on the screen in the N. aisle, and the carved rest on which the visitor's book now stands. The monuments are interesting. In the N. aisle there are two tombs with recumbent effigies, one of a lady, the other of a warrior with ailettes on his shoulders, a rare ornament only worn about the reign of Edward II. There are three brasses in the chancel—a very fine one to Sir John Wilcotes, d. 1410; a smaller one dated 1513; and a third on the wall with a representation of the Trinity. A tablet to Lord Falkland has been added recently. His burial is recorded in the register (23rd Sept., 1643), but there is no contemporary monument. The large Chantrey monument, though beautiful in itself, was not worth the defacement of the chancel by plaster abominations, and by the alteration of two of the double-light windows to single lights.

*Little Tew* is in a hollow  $\frac{3}{4}$  mile to the W., and has a new church. Between the two villages are cross-roads overshadowed by thick beech-trees, an eerie-looking spot in the twilight, where a white lady is said to walk.

THAME (12 miles E. of Oxford; station on G.W.R.) is a largish market-town on the river Thame, which here for some distance bounds Oxfordshire and Bucks. The town consists mainly of High Street, a long straight street running N.W. to S.E., and of remarkable breadth, till it is cut into by the town hall and adjacent buildings. The general modern appearance of the town conceals its real antiquity. At the Conquest it belonged to Dorchester, but, on the see being transferred to

## LITTLE TEW—THAME

Lincoln, it became the property of the bishops of that diocese. To this circumstance is due the beautiful E.E. work of the church, which was built by the great Bishop Grossetête, and attached as a prebend to Lincoln Cathedral. At the reformation the manor fell into the hands of Lord Williams, a remarkable man, who, as commissioner for the dissolution of the monasteries, secured for himself the best Church lands in Oxfordshire (see also *Rycote*). He was given his title by Queen Mary, in whose cause he had been active ; and as sheriff of the county, conducted the martyr bishops to execution. His "Make short, make short" at Cranmer's burning is often quoted against him, but it should be added that he at once pledged himself to carry out a request of Latimer's at the stake. He was indeed a better man than appears from a bare recital of the salient acts of his life. By his will he founded the free Grammar School of Thame, and rebuilt some almshouses.

During the Civil War Thame was not held as a fortified post, but was occupied now by one party, now by another. Thus Essex made it his headquarters in June, 1643, but retired from it in July. Anthony Wood, who was at the time a boy at the Grammar School, relates that on one occasion he saw a Cavalier colonel hotly pursued through the street of the town by a Roundhead colonel ; while on another occasion, just as a company of Roundhead soldiers were sitting down to dinner, a Cavalier force appeared "to beat up their quarters," and the Roundheads retired in a hurry, leaving the boys to enjoy their venison pasties.

But the greatest interest attaching to the town at this period centres round John Hampden. Here

## OXFORDSHIRE

he was educated, the most illustrious of the many distinguished *alumni* of the Grammar School. And here also he came to die, after his fatal wound at Chalgrove Field (see *Chalgrove*). Tradition may be right in pointing out as the scene of his death a house in the middle of the town, formerly the Greyhound Inn, but the well-known detailed account of his last moments, though recorded by all historians down to Gardiner, and the theme of an eloquent passage in Macaulay's Essay, is now considered "an impudent forgery".

The church, as built by Bishop Grossetête in 1240, is co-extensive with the present building, which is cruciform, with central lantern tower. The principal changes have been: 1. (geometrical) the insertion of two windows in the chancel; 2. (late Dec.) the insertion of the windows S. of chancel and the alteration of the nave aisles, including all the windows; 3. (Perp.) addition of clerestory and roof to nave, alteration of tower, followed later by reconstruction of transepts, and much later by insertion of debased W. window.<sup>1</sup> Of the original E.E. work there remain the nave arcades, with their lofty clustered columns, the plainer massive tower-piers, and the similar plain arches leading from the aisles to the transepts. Nearly all the lancets have disappeared. N. of the chancel there was a row of six, the hood-mouldings of which formed a continuous string-course. Four

<sup>1</sup> It should be stated that some authorities explain Thame church rather differently. This will be best illustrated by giving the dates of Mr. Braton, the architect—i.e., chancel, 1241; nave and transepts, 1325-1375; S. windows of chancel, 1358; clerestory, 1404; tower and transepts, 1425-1515. If these dates should prove correct, all that has been written about "Lincoln masons" seems off the point.

## THAME

of them still remain, but the sixth in order has been blocked, and the fifth altered to a very pretty early geometrical window. Below it is an E.E. door. The E. window is a larger geometrical one, somewhat later than the one just mentioned, but restoration has partly spoilt it. S. of the chancel is a row of late Dec. windows, with reticulated tracery. The windows in the N. aisle of nave are also reticulated (restored), but those in the S. aisle exhibit strange and beautiful tracery of the same period. The S. porch is extremely beautiful Dec. It is groined and has a parvise above it. In front, between two foliated lancets, is an elaborate niche, which used to contain a statue of the Virgin and Child, soon, it may be hoped, to be replaced. The clerestory and roof are good early Perp., and the central tower seems to have been rebuilt or altered about the same time. The shallow transepts were changed to Perp. about fifty years later.<sup>1</sup> They show slight traces of the original E.E., *i.e.*, a lancet window W. of N. transept, and two odd little lancets high up above the large Perp. window in S. transept. E. of this transept is a shallow blocked recess with a Perp. window, which formerly led into a chapel of St. Christopher, now destroyed. The font is probably E.E. There is a rather dilapidated double piscina in the chancel and another in S. transept. The chancel screen and stalls are said to have been brought from Thame Abbey at the Dissolution. The monuments are particularly numerous and interesting. There are five altar tombs and six brasses which should be noticed. Right in the centre of the chancel is the

<sup>1</sup> The accounts of the rebuilding of the N. transept are extant, dated 1442 A.D.

## OXFORDSHIRE

fine tomb of Lord Williams and his wife, 1559. The effigies are in alabaster and the tomb magnificently panelled. The leaden coffin has disappeared, having probably been melted down for bullets in the Civil War. In the S. transept are the two Quartermayne tombs; one with many brass effigies of the family in the fourteenth century; the other with the effigies of Richard and Sybil Quartermayne, founders of Rycote chapel (see *Rycote*), 1460. Round the edge of the tomb runs a long English inscription. There is a curious figure built into the wall above which seems to belong to another tomb. A fourth altar-tomb is to Sir John Clarke, and a fifth (in N. transept) to Geoffrey Dormer, his two wives and twenty-five children. Of the six brasses, one dated 1508 is in the nave; two are under the central arches, one dated 1503, the other with inscription lost; and three in the chancel; one half-hidden in the floor, with mutilated inscription, perhaps 1463, and two later ones dated 1597 and 1667.

Between the church and the High Street is the *Old Grammar School*, Lord Williams' foundation, at which several celebrated men have been educated, including John Hampden, Anthony Wood, Dean Fell of Christ Church, and Edward Pococke, the Orientalist. It is an effective building, dating from 1575. It stands back from the street, nearer to which is a long timber-built house which seems connected with it. It is now used as a girls' school, the boys school having been transferred to new buildings on the Oxford road.

N.W. of the church are the *prebendal house and chapel*, which were built by Grossetête at the same time as the church. They are in private grounds,

## THAME—THAME PARK

and can only be seen by special permission. The chapel is a little E.E. gem, quite simple, except the lancet triplet at the E. end, which is recessed behind a beautiful arcade, with clustered columns and characteristic foliage. The chapel is some distance above the level of the ground, but there was apparently no vault beneath. W. of it is a building supposed to be the refectory, showing a large round Perp. window on the S.; and still farther W., a range of buildings with open timber roof, which may have been the dormitory. Nearly all the windows and doors are Perp., but there is a quaint E.E. chimney, and near it an odd-looking window which may also be E.E. The part of the buildings now inhabited contained the great hall, now cut up into several rooms. The front door is E.E., with an exterior Perp. porch. The surrounding moat is very plain on the W. side of the buildings.

*Thame Park* ( $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles S.), the residence of Wenman A. Wykeham-Musgrave, Esq., is on the site of a Cistercian abbey, which was transferred here from Oddington in 1138. The great church has entirely disappeared, the present chapel being a modern erection of 1838. The front part of the present house, which faces W., was built in 1746, and is not impressive. But at the back two long blocks of ancient buildings stretch away E., at right angles to the more modern part. The smaller block, now used as a kitchen, only shows old masonry and some buttresses. The larger one is Tudor and was built by Robert King, who was abbot here from 1530 to the dissolution of the abbey in 1539. Afterwards he was made first Bishop of Oxford, which dignity he retained during the reigns of

## OXFORDSHIRE

Edward VI. and Mary. He was denounced as a "persecuting bishop" for being one of Cranmer's judges, and his career seems to show that he was a time-server also.

His buildings show a S. frontage which, for Tudor work, is hardly equalled in the county. There are three superb oriel windows, of which the two facing S. are separated by a stair-turret. All are battlemented, and have at the top a cornice set with grotesque heads. The third oriel window faces W., and has below it a coat-of-arms and two Tudor roses. To the E. is a second and finer stair-turret. There are two remarkable rooms: (1) the Gothic dining-room, which is panelled throughout in oak, the ceiling being the finest part, and bears the name of "Robert Kynge" on the cornice. On the walls are the family portraits. That over the mantelpiece is said to be the abbot, though the dress is not clerical. Another portrait is of Isabel, daughter of Lord Williams of Thame, who married Lord Wenman. The abbot himself was brother-in-law to Lord Williams. (2) The *abbot's parlour*, which is reached by a turret-staircase and contains a fine oriel window. It is panelled all round in oak, an admirable example of the linen pattern, above which is a cornice of white painted wood, elaborately carved, but unfortunately defaced. Two panelled ribs cross the ceiling, near the intersection of which are the abbot's initials, "R. K.". There is a good fireplace and an interior porch like that in Broughton drawing-room. Above is another fine room with an old bed. The park is large and full of deer.

*Thame* (river). (See Introduction, p. 12.)

*Thames* (river). (See Introduction, pp. 9, 18.)

## THAME PARK—TUSMORE

*Tiddington* (9 miles E. of Oxford) is a station on the G.W.R. (See *Albury*).

*Tusmore* (about 16 miles N. of Oxford, 6½ miles N. of Bicester) was formerly a village with a church, both of which have disappeared. It formed in the fourteenth century part of the estate of Sir Roger de Cotesford (see *Cottisford*), who built a manor-house here. About 1600 it was bought by the Fermors of Somerton, who held it for two centuries. They were a noted Roman Catholic family, and built a chapel here, which is also no longer existing. In Elizabeth's reign, when the Jesuits were banished, one of them was in hiding here, and the tradition is that he worked as a labourer on the estate, and dug out the large pond below the house. The heroine in the "Rape of the Lock" was a Miss Arabella Fermor of Tusmore, and Pope, who was a visitor here, wrote the poem to make up the quarrel ensuing on Lord Petre's presumption in venturing to cut off a lock of her hair. Mr. William Fermor in 1788 had an important correspondence with Pitt, followed by an interview, on Catholic disabilities. Soon after the last Fermor died, the estate was purchased by Lord Effingham, whose heir holds it to-day. The old house was rebuilt in 1770, and very little even of *this* house remains, for it was destroyed by fire about 1840, and again rebuilt by Lord Effingham. The only ancient building which survives is a fifteenth century granary with a dove-cot above. It is built of oak, resting on supports of rude stone. The house contains some interesting family portraits, including the Duke of Norfolk, who died in 1553; his son, Earl Surrey; the first Earl of Effingham, chamberlain to Queen Mary; and Charles Howard,



## OXFORDSHIRE

second Earl of Effingham, victor over the Spanish Armada.

*Warborough* (12 miles S.E. of Oxford) has a church with one of the rare leaden fonts, of which there are only two in Oxfordshire. It is Trans., set on a Perp. pedestal, and strongly resembles the one at Long Wittenham (Berks), a short distance S. of the Thames. Both appear simplifications of the more elaborate one at Dorchester, and doubtless all three are by the same hand. The church has an E.E. chancel, with Dec. and Perp. windows inserted, but traces of the original lancets are very plain. There is a piscina, and sill-sedile, and the remains of the rood-loft serve as chancel arch. The S. chapel is Dec. with piscina; the nave has Dec. walls but with Perp. windows inserted; the tower is dated 1666.

A little S. is the hamlet of *Shillingford*, close to the Thames, over which there is a bridge. The scenery on the Berkshire bank is pretty.

*Wardington* (4½ miles N. of Banbury, 2 miles E. of Cropredy Station) has a church mainly E.E. and Dec. The chancel and its S. aisle show a few Norman or Trans. features (in particular two deeply splayed windows which are slightly pointed), but they are otherwise Dec. The nave with its aisles is E.E. with a few Dec. alterations; and there are the usual Perp. clerestory and tower. There are two plain E.E. arcades, only the two columns nearest the S. door having engaged shafts. The S. door is E.E. and has a large stoup. Most of the aisle windows are grouped lancets, but some are Dec. There are three Dec. piscinæ in the church. The font shows the date 1666. The chancel aisle is surrounded by good screens. In the register for

## WARBOROUGH—WATERPERRY

30th June, 1644, is the burial of a cornet killed at Cropredy "in a smart battaile against ye rebels". This is altered in another hand to "against the Parliament".

*Water Eaton* (4 miles N. of Oxford) is a beautiful early Jacobean manor-house on the banks of the Cherwell, often visited by a row up-stream from Oxford. Since the ancient road ran between the house and the river, the front of the house is approached in this direction. Passing through the pillars of the entrance gate, with two wing-buildings, the stables and the dairy, on our right and left, we are in the courtyard. On the far side rises the old house with a front of three gables, and an elaborate porch, somewhat projecting from the rest of the building. Inside, there is a doorway dated 1586, and probably exterior to an older house. The panelled rooms and large windows are very effective. The chapel lies to the N. Though built about 1610, its windows are good Perp. in type. The pulpit, screen and pews show good Jacobean carving. The general effect resembles a college chapel. During the Civil War Lord Lovelace lived here. His wife was once captured by some Roundheads, who took her 10 miles in her own carriage and then turned her out to walk back.

*Waterperry* (7 miles E. of Oxford, 3 miles N.E. of Wheatley) is a strangely out-of-the-way village near the Thame. The church is in the grounds of the park and manor-house, which has been inhabited in turn by the Fitzelys, the Curzons, and the Henleys. The S. arcade is Trans.; the chancel E.E., but with a Dec. chancel arch and E. window. Also there are two Dec. corbel-heads. The nave has three good geometrical windows N.

## OXFORDSHIRE

The S. aisle is mainly Perp., and the W. window is late Perp. There is a great deal of good old glass in the church, some of it being monumental, *i.e.*, one window to the Fitzelys, another to the Curzons. Under a splendid tomb (late Dec. or early Perp.) lies the effigy of a Fitzely in plate armour. There is a fine double brass to Walter Curzon and his wife (also commemorated in the window already mentioned). It is a palimpsest, the figures having been altered from the costume of 1450 into that of 1530. Another Curzon monument is dated 1610. The Henley mausoleum is in the churchyard, but there is a pathetic monument by Chantrey to one of the family, a young wife leaving her child and husband. There is one other small brass. Note also: (1) the font, a Perp. basin on a Dec. base; (2) the rood-staircase contained in a side turret; (3) the sanctus bell cot.

*Waterstock* (9½ miles E. of Oxford, 1 mile N.W. of Tiddington Station) is a well-wooded village near the Thame. The church has a Perp. tower and N. aisle; the rest was rebuilt in 1792. It contains the tomb of Sir George Croke (see *Studley*), and a window full of old glass, mostly the "genealogie of the family of the Asshehursts," the lords of the manor.

*Watlington* (14 miles S.W. of Oxford; station on the G.W.R.) is an important market-town lying at the foot of the Chilterns, on which an obelisk has been cut in the chalk just above the town. There is little to interest the visitor. Of a castle built here in the fourteenth century only the trace of a moat remains. There is a picturesque old *market hall* built in 1664 and much out of repair. It is built of brick, and stands on wide open arches. The

## WATERSTOCK—WESTWELL

windows have brick mouldings and there is a small wooden turret. The church is large, spacious and well appointed, but of little importance architecturally. The restoration of 1877 has hopelessly confused its history, by mixing up new with old. Of an old Norman church there remain at least two traces, a plain door E. of the N. aisle, and a small column built into the S. chancel wall. Otherwise the ancient parts seem to be those which are late Dec. and Perp. The E. window has a good flamboyant pattern, and the tall ivy-clad tower is effective. There is a good brass dated 1485, and two small later ones. The vestry has an old piscina.

*Wendlebury* (10 miles N.E. of Oxford, 2½ miles S.W. of Bicester) has a church rebuilt in 1762, and lately again restored. Its only ancient features are an early geometrical window, Dec. tomb-recess and curious bracket in the N. chapel, and a Perp. S. door. The tower was taken down a few years ago.

*Weston-on-the-Green* (8½ miles N.E. of Oxford) has an old Elizabethan manor-house, but considerably altered by successive owners. The village stocks are still to be seen "on the green". The church was rebuilt in 1743 in the "Grecian" style, but retains its fine old tower, whose style is difficult to read. It was originally Norman, but the top storey is apparently late Trans. or E.E., and a Perp. cornice and turrets have been added.

*South Weston* (15 miles S.E. of Oxford) has a rebuilt and uninteresting church. It retains a Norman font and doorway (N.). Above the Dec. E. window is a niche with statue of St. Lawrence, the patron saint.

*Westwell* (2 miles S.W. of Burford) is a small

## OXFORDSHIRE

village near the W. boundary of the county. It is charmingly set in a little wooded hollow by a brook, with several old gabled cottages, a manor-house turned into a farm, and an ancient-looking vicarage. The little church is interesting. Originally Norman, it was altered both in the Trans. and E.E. periods. The nave has Norman walls with two original doors, the S. one being good. The chancel arch, window N. of chancel, and the strange and beautiful font are Trans. Two E.E. lancets have been added S. of the chancel. The E. window is circular, and contains plate-tracery of a rare kind (Trans. to Dec.). There is a Perp. window S. of nave, and Perp. S. porch with a stoup. The W. end is modern. There is a fine tomb to an unknown Elizabethan worthy and a large tomb to Charles Trinder, 1657.

*Wheatfield House* (13½ miles S.E. of Oxford) was an ancient manor belonging to Lord Charles Spencer, but burnt down in 1813. Some of the offices remain, including a tower still tenanted by pigeons. Below, in the woods, is an effective large walled garden. The church is close by, beautifully placed on the slope of some rising ground, and near a clump of beech-trees, where Charles I. once breakfasted, after a skirmish in the valley. Unfortunately it has been altered to "Georgian," except the Perp. chancel arch.

*Wheatley* (5½ miles E. of Oxford; station on G.W.R.) is a well-built village, with some old houses and a new church. On *Castle Hill*, 1 mile S.E., there used to be some remains of a Roman villa, of which nothing is left.

*Whitchurch* is a very pretty riverside village, opposite Pangbourne (station on G.W.R.). The

## WESTWELL—WHITCHURCH

river as it flows between the twin villages is extremely beautiful, with a well-known weir and long wooden bridge. Whitchurch has several new houses, but it has escaped the relentless over-building from which Pangbourne is suffering. It is partly built on the lower slopes of the chalk hills, which rise steeply and with effect almost from the river-bank. The church has been rebuilt. One Dec. window S. of chancel may be old. The S. porch is old, in style Perp., with a small Dec. crucifix built in above it. The doorway has a Norman arch, with a Perp. door inserted below it. Inside are four brasses of some interest (dated 1420, 1455, 1543 and 1610) and a Jacobean monument.

Half-way between Whitchurch and Mapledurham is *Hardwicke House*, a beautiful red-brick mansion, originally Tudor, but in part later, and a good deal modernised. Its situation is delightful, on a slope reaching down to the river, and backed by one of the finest stretches of the chalk hills. Here is preserved a painting of an old lady who kept an inn at *Cullen* (or *Collins*) *End* (a hamlet about  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile N.), and who is said to have waited on Charles I. when he played bowls there. The story is that when Charles was a prisoner at Caversham Park in July, 1647, he was allowed to walk over to the Cullen End bowling-green. The walk, however, would be over 5 miles each way. The inn sign-post retained until 20 years ago the following inscription:—

Stop, traveller, stop! in yonder peacefull glade  
His favourite game the Royal Martyr played;  
Here stripped of honours, children, freedom, rank,  
Drank from the bowl, and bowled for what he drank,  
Sought in a cheerfull glass his cares to drown,  
And changed his guinea ere he lost his crown.

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*Widford* (2 miles W. of Burford) is an extinct parish beside the Windrush. The little desecrated church is rapidly falling into ruin. It is built on the site of a Roman villa. The font and plain W. door are Norman, but nearly every other feature is Dec. At the E. end there are two niches, a piscina, and an aumbry. The pulpit is old.

*Wigginton* (7 miles S.W. of Banbury), in the Swere Valley, has an interesting church. The nave and aisles are E.E., with only two inserted Dec. windows (W.). They contain two good arcades and grouped triplets of lancets. The chancel is late Dec., some of the windows showing Trans. to Perp. The clerestory and tower are Perp. There is a piscina in S. aisle, and a shallow arched recess in N. aisle. The Perp. carving on two of the pews is old. The rood-stairs are carried in a newel staircase. The chancel has many points of interest: (1) good Dec. piscina, with ball-flower; (2) two low side windows, both being projections under transoms of other windows. Near the one to the S. is a remarkable canopied seat, which is Dec. and shows the ball-flower; (3) arched tomb-recess (N.), with effigy of cross-legged knight; (4) another arched recess (S.) showing ball-flower with effigies of a man and two praying children. In 1824 a Roman villa was discovered 300 yards E. of the church. The site was afterwards ploughed up, and the whole has disappeared. An engraving of the pavement may be seen in Beesley's *History of Banbury*.

*Wilcote* (about 14 miles N.W. of Oxford, about 3½ miles S. of Charlbury Station) is a charming woodland region, formerly a vast park, lying on high ground W. of the Evenlode, and

## WIDFORD—WITNEY

commanding fine views over the valley. Dismissing *Wilcote House*, a picturesque Elizabethan mansion, but much modernised, which is *not* in the parish, the parish contains two houses and the church. The little church, once a graceful Dec. building, has been reduced to nonentity by restoration. The W. end is effective; two late Dec. windows divided by a centre buttress. On the S. there are remains of an older building, a blocked Norman doorway, a blocked arch which led into a transeptal chapel, and a lancet window. Inside are a squint and a piscina.

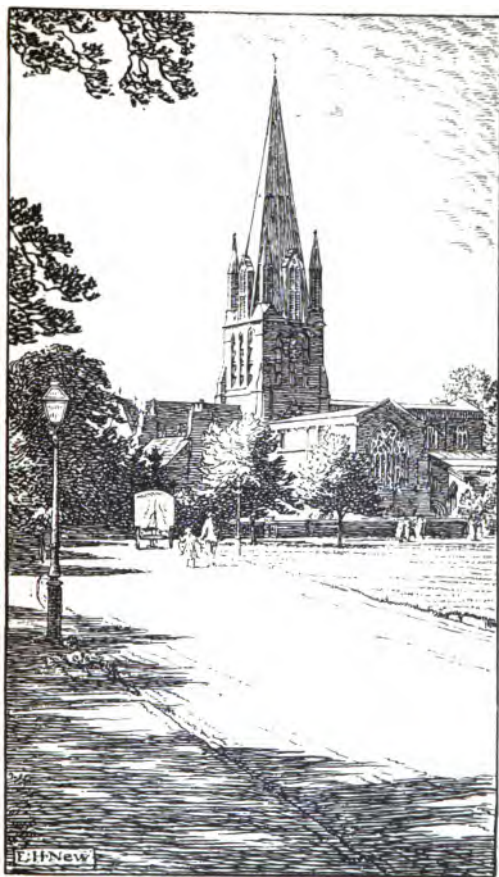
*Windrush* (river). (See Introduction, p. 11.)

WITNEY (11 miles W. of Oxford; station on G.W.R.) is chiefly known for its long-established and still thriving manufacture of blankets, to which a special excellence is said to be given by the nitrous qualities of the water of the Windrush, on which the town lies. It is whispered, however, that if a Witney manufacturer be asked the truth of this story, he will, "smiling, put the question by". Its only connection with history is that Charles I. passed through it in his night retreat from Oxford on 3rd June, 1644, and again on his return on 21st June, when he effected here a junction with the rest of his forces. The main street runs from N. to S., where it expands into a fair green, round which are placed all the buildings of interest. A little N. of it is the *Butter Cross*, erected in 1683, but a picturesque and well-built structure for its date, supported on 13 round pillars. At the S.E. corner is *Mount House*, now modern, but marking the site of the ancient residence of the Bishops of Winchester, who owned the manor and the living from before the Conquest down to quite recent



## OXFORDSHIRE

times. On the W. is the *Grammar School*, founded in 1663, the buildings of which are approached by an avenue of elms. S. of the green is the best view of the splendid church, with its tall and graceful E.E. spire, and its beautiful N. window, which has flowing tracery of the lily pattern, and is perhaps the finest Dec. window in the county. Inside, the church is somewhat disappointing, since the arches and pillars are angular and featureless, and there is a large space of blank wall in the nave. This absence of character in the arcades, and the complicated changes which have taken place, especially in the transepts, make the history of the church difficult to read. The present cruciform structure was built in E.E. times. Of an earlier Norman church there remain two traces—two small blocked windows above the nave arcades, and the fine Trans. N. doorway and porch, above which has been built a Perp. parvise, with a strange cornice of animal figures. The central piers, with the tower and spire, are the original E.E. ; also the chancel, the E. end alone being a restoration. The extent of the original E.E. transepts is marked by the lancets and the exterior string-course on the E. side. Since then they have been altered again and again in Dec. and Perp. times, and have been increased in all three dimensions, *i.e.*, not only lengthened, but given W. aisles and clerestories. The N. transept was certainly lengthened in the Dec. period. The clerestory is Perp., and the W. arcade and aisle also seem Perp., yet the N. window of the aisle is Dec. In the S. transept the extensions both S. and W. show nothing but Perp. features, yet the clerestory above the whole is Dec. The rationale of these perplexing changes was



WITNEY CHURCH AND GREEN



## WITNEY

partly the provision of side-altars, and chantry chapels, of which many traces remain. The Dec. chapel at the end of the N. transept must have been magnificent. It was raised on a crypt, the arches of which are traceable, above the present level of the floor, and lighted by three beautiful Dec. windows, one of them the splendid window already described. Below it are two elaborately foliated and canopied niches, with stone effigies. Farther S. was another Perp. chapel, of which the reredos remains, with a Perp. window above it strangely inserted in the lancet frame. The E. wall of the S. transept has also a complicated tale to tell of vanished chapels, and at its S. end is a large blocked arch, which formerly led into a chapel extending farther E. On the W. side of the aisle is also a small chapel, with altar-tomb and brasses to Richard Waynman and his wives (d. 1500). Round the edge of the tomb there used to be the following inscription, now torn off:—

Man in what state that ever thou be  
Timor Mortis should trouble thee,  
For when thou least wenyst,  
Veniet te Mors superare.

The plain nave arcades are probably E.E. The clerestory is Perp., also the grand W. door and window, and the door and windows in the S. aisle. N. of the nave is the fine *Wenman* (or Waynman) *Chapel*, in which Dec. and Perp. work are again strangely mixed. Probably the chapel, with the beautiful door, and E. and W. windows may be considered late Dec. or Trans. to Perp., but the square-headed S. windows are later Perp. The late use of the ball-flower can be paralleled at

## OXFORDSHIRE

Ducklington, Coggs and other churches in the neighbourhood. Inside there are piscina, and altar-tomb with effigy. The Dec. buttresses should be noticed, outside both this chapel and the N. transept.

*Wolvercote* (2 miles N. of Oxford) is a village on the edge of Port Meadow, a long stretch of flat land belonging to Oxford city and bordering the Thames above Oxford for about 1½ miles. The name is less correctly spelt Woolvercot, for its derivation seems to have to do with wolves rather than sheep. The church is new, except the tower, which was last altered in Perp. times, but retains an earlier Dec. belfry window. It has a curious stone roof. Inside is a fine altar-tomb to Sir John Walter, d. 1631.

*Woodcote* (3 miles E. of Goring Station), a village among the Chilterns, has a rebuilt Norman church, in which the apsidal form has been carefully preserved.

*Wood Eaton* (7 miles N. of Oxford, *via* Mars-ton) is a good example of an English village.

Where all things in their place remain,  
As they were ordered ages since.

Church, cottages, gabled rectory, and manor-house surrounded by elm-trees, are set round the little village green, on which stand the cross. Hard by are the well, the village pond into which it overflows, and the pound. The only irrelevant note is the squire's water-tower. The manor-house is eighteenth century, but is on the site of a building erected by Sir Richard Taverner, sheriff and lay-preacher, whose strange sermons at St. Mary's, Oxford, are referred to in Anthony Wood's history.

## WOLVERCOTE—WOODSTOCK

The church looks odd from outside, the flat roof of the chancel contrasting with the high-pitched roof of the nave, broken by the tower. Inside we again find an old order unchanged, but it is the order of the eighteenth century, from which the restorers, with all their faults, have delivered us. The church is rather late but rude E.E., with few additions, mainly some Perp. windows and the W. tower, which has been strangely built into the church, leaving the E.E. W. front intact, and resting on two unsightly internal piers. All authorities call the tower Perp. but the belfry window is Dec. Note also the piscina, primitive sedile, late Perp. screen, and plain E.E. font, with a trefoiled niche near it for holding the baptismal oil.

WOODSTOCK (7½ miles N.W. of Oxford; station on G.W.R.) is a little town on the Glyme chiefly remarkable in itself for its manufacture of gloves, an industry which still exists, but has diminished in importance since the time when a pair of Woodstock gloves was a present worthy of a king's or queen's acceptance. But the place is of transcendent interest as an important royal manor, inhabited by nearly all the kings of England in turn, and the home of countless romantic stories, both in history and in legend. The story that King Alfred here wrote his translation of *Boetius de Consolatione* seems now placed in the latter category, but it is more certain that Æthelred the Redeless published some ordinances while staying here. In Domesday Book Woodstock is called a royal forest. Henry I. was the first Norman king attracted by the hunting in Oxfordshire. He built a royal palace close to the town, and surrounded the large park with a stone wall. The

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absurd story that villages were destroyed to furnish the stone may be compared with the stories about the New Forest. In Henry II.'s reign we have the celebrated romance of Fair Rosamond, which history has been steadily demolishing. The only certain facts are that she was Walter de Clifford's daughter and Henry's mistress, and that she was buried at Godstow (*q.v.*). Even her residence at Woodstock, though probable, does not rest on contemporary evidence. All the stories of Eleanor's interference are late accretions. In fact, Henry, instead of hiding Rosamond from Eleanor, had already adopted the safer alternative of shutting Eleanor up. Becket visited Woodstock three times. On the third occasion, when he came to withdraw a consent he had given to one of Henry's demands, he was spurned from the door. In 1187 another guest, St. Hugh, Bishop of Lincoln, was treated discourteously by Henry, who, instead of attending to him, began sewing up a rag on his finger. St. Hugh quietly remarked that the occupation befitted the descendant of the Falaise tanner. The next seven kings in succession have all visited Woodstock. Henry III., in 1238, had a narrow escape here from a crazy clerk, who climbed through his chamber-window at night to murder him. Edward III. was a frequent visitor, and two of his sons were born here, the Black Prince and Thomas of Woodstock (Earl of Gloucester). In this reign it is probable the poet Chaucer visited Woodstock, in the train of Queen Philippa. There is an old house still called *Chaucer's House*, near the main entrance to the park. But its original tenant was almost certainly not the poet, but Thomas Chaucer, probably his son (see *Ewelme*), who received a grant

## WOODSTOCK

of the manor of Woodstock from Henry IV.'s queen in 1411. After Richard II., Henry VI. is the next royal visitor we hear of, then Edward IV., Richard III. and the two last Henrys. Henry VII. repaired the palace, and, in particular, rebuilt the great gate-house. This, fifty years later, was used as a prison for his descendant, the Princess Elizabeth, who was confined here by her sister Mary under the custody of Sir Henry Bedingfield. Tennyson has faithfully reproduced the historic scene, how she wrote on the window :—

Much suspected, of me  
Nothing proved can be,  
Quoth Elizabeth, Prisoner,

and how she envied the lot of a milkmaid who was singing cheerfully outside. She was once endangered by a fire which broke out under the floor of her bed-chamber. She three times afterwards revisited Woodstock under happier auspices as queen. (For her appointment of Sir Henry Lee as Ranger of Woodstock, see *Ditchley*.) James I. came here frequently for the hunting, but he found the palace in bad repair, and seems to have preferred being a guest at Ditchley. Still we hear of festivities at the palace, *e.g.*, those in 1612 in which the ill-fated Prince Henry took a leading part. Charles I. also was here several times, his last two visits being during the Civil War. The palace was garrisoned as one of the outlying defences of Oxford, and after many vicissitudes surrendered to the Parliament on 26th April, 1646, the day before Charles finally left Oxford. In 1649 it was taken possession of by seven commissioners, who were frightened away by the tricks of Joe

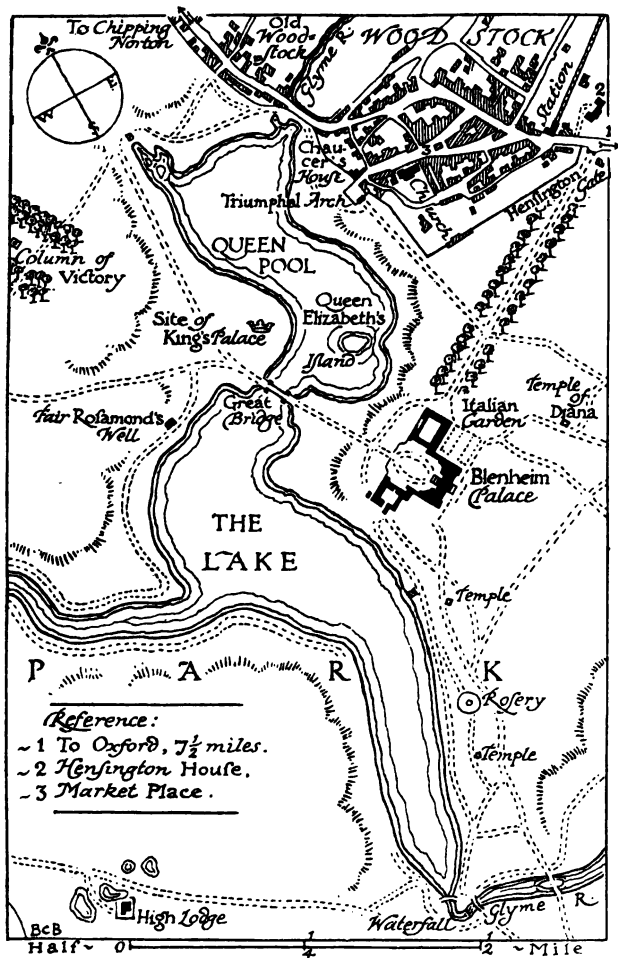


## OXFORDSHIRE

Collins, "the Merry Devil of Woodstock," which were generally believed at the time to be supernatural. Scott has utilised the incident in *Woodstock*, but even with greater licence of adaptation than he usually allows himself.<sup>1</sup> Shortly afterwards, in 1651, the palace was mainly destroyed, though some portions, including the large gate-house, still remained inhabitable, and it was visited both by Charles II. and James II., the latter of whom dined here in state in 1687. In a survey taken in 1704 the buildings were stated to be quite ruinous.

At this date we pass at once from ancient to modern history, from the royal palace to **BLenheim**. In 1704 the royal manor of *Woodstock* was inalienably conferred on John Churchill, Duke of Marlborough, as a reward for his famous victory at *Blenheim* in that year, a sum of £500,000 being at the same time voted by Parliament to build the stately palace, which bears in commemoration the name of the little Danube village. The direction of the works was placed by the duke in the duchess' hands, and she quickly made the life of the architect, Sir John Vanbrugh, a burden to him by stinting him in everything, and quarrelling persistently over every detail. On one occasion she wrote an order forbidding the architect to enter the works. One of these petty squabbles sealed the fate of the ruins of the old palace. Godolphin had suggested to the duchess that a pile of ruins in front of the palace was unseemly. But when Sir John Vanbrugh pleaded for their

<sup>1</sup> *Woodstock* is admirable as a picture of the manners and types of character in that age. But, so far as facts are history, it is unhistorical from cover to cover.



MAP OF WOODSTOCK AND BLENHEIM



## WOODSTOCK

preservation the imperious Atossa<sup>1</sup> suspected him of wishing to turn them into a house for himself, and ordered every stone to be carted away. Amid such disputes the building went on slowly. The duke died in 1722 before it was finished, and the work, when at last completed by the duchess, cost £300,000, much of which came out of her private pocket, since of the sum voted by Parliament only about half was paid.

*(The park is always open to pedestrians, but cycles are forbidden, and the grass must not be walked upon. The house and gardens can be seen on Tuesdays and Fridays in summer from 12 to 3 P.M. by applying at the house itself. Fee 1/- for the house and 1/- for the gardens.)*

The entrance to the park is at the W. end of the main street of the town, and through a heavy triumphal arch, which the duchess had erected the year after the duke's death, with a Latin inscription outside and a translation of it on the inside. On entering, the visitor has at once before him the lake, and the splendid bridge across it. When first constructed the bridge only spanned the narrow waters of the little Glyme, a contrast which provoked several epigrams. The authorship of the following is uncertain :—

The minnows, as through this vast arch they pass,  
Cry "How like whales we look, thanks to your Grace!"

Much better is Dr. Abel Evans' epigram, which has a double sting :—

The lofty arch his high ambition shows ;  
The stream an emblem of his bounty flows.

<sup>1</sup> "Atossa, cursed with every granted prayer" (see Pope, *Essay on Women*, 113-148).

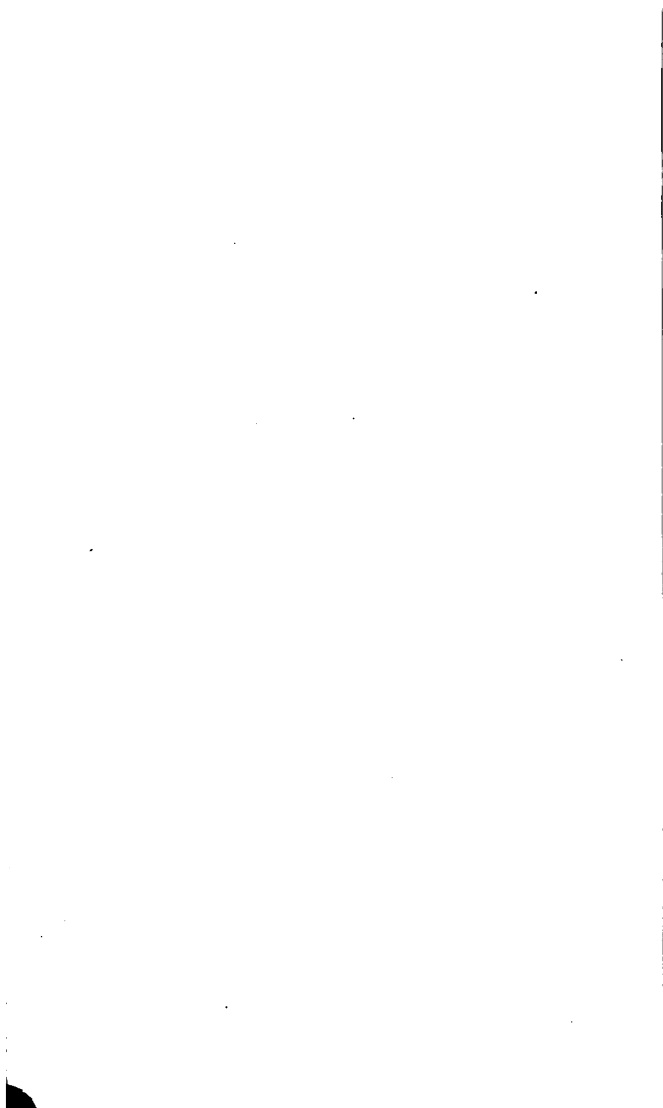
## OXFORDSHIRE

In a similar spirit Horace Walpole, after heartily abusing the contents of the palace, ends up with the words: "The place is as ugly as the house, and the bridge, like the beggars at the old duchess' gate, begs for a drop of water and is refused". From this situation Blenheim was rescued by the genius of "Capability" Brown, the celebrated landscape gardener (see also *Nuneham*), who, by damming up the Glyme, enriched the park with the present beautiful lake, and gave the bridge a meaning. "The Thames will never forgive me" he is said to have boasted, "for what I have done at Blenheim." When Dr. Johnson visited the park some years later he said that "the epigram had been drowned".

Most visitors will first walk round by the front of the palace to the bridge. When crossing the latter, we have facing us, at some distance to the N., the monument set up by the duchess to the duke. It is 134 feet high and contains a statue of the duke at the top, and an account of his virtues and achievements on the pedestal. The groups of trees around are said to be so arranged as to form a plan of the battle of Blenheim. Directly the bridge is crossed we have on the right the site of the old royal palace, marked by a clump of sycamores on the high ground above the lake. To the left, and close to the lake, is *Rosamond's Well*, a square enclosed pool of clear water. This is said to have been the site of "Rosamond's Bower," the nature of which can only be conjectured. A visitor in 1634, writes: "I asked my guide to conduct me to the labyrinth. I found nothing in this bower but ruines, but many strong and strange-winding walls and turnings, and a dainty, clear, paved well, wherein this beautiful creature



BLENHEIM



## WOODSTOCK

did wash." At the time of the Civil War these ruins were entirely destroyed, lest they should give cover for an attack on the palace.

Recrossing the bridge we have the front of *Blenheim Palace* immediately before us. As to its architectural merits, opinions will probably always differ. To judge it fairly one should clear one's mind of the prejudice naturally created by the date of its erection, and by Dr. Abel Evans' epigram on Sir John Vanbrugh:—

Lie heavy on him, earth, for he  
Laid many a heavy load on thee.

That the palace is heavy and ungraceful its admirers will hardly deny, but it may lay claim to a massive dignity and a skilful combination of its parts. The interior has the effect of a long allegorical pæan on the glories of the great duke. Far better surely if the celebrated Blenheim despatch (in the grand cabinet) had been allowed to speak for itself, in which the duke wrote on the back of a hotel bill "Tallard and the other Generals are in my coach". The rooms shown are: (1) The lofty hall, with one of the allegories just referred to on the ceiling. (2) Four rooms to the E., *i.e.*, the grand cabinet facing E. and three rooms facing S., and opening out of one another, *i.e.*, the small green drawing-room, the billiard-room, and the dining-room, the last two hung with tapestry. (3) The central saloon facing S., which has been decorated by Laguerre in a remarkable way. The ceiling has an elaborate allegory, but the sides represent a sort of colonnade, through which figures in the garbs of various nations are looking. (4) Three state-rooms to the W. leading out of one another. All are



## OXFORDSHIRE

hung with good Brussels tapestry, representing the exploits of the duke. (5) The long library, a very fine and lofty room with carved walls of white wood, and occupying the whole W. front. Note the statue of Queen Anne. The famous collection of books was sold in 1882. The dreary splendour of so many state-rooms provoked Pope into satirising them in an imitation of an epigram of Martial, ending with the lines:—

Thanks, sir, cried I, 'tis very fine,  
But where d'ye sleep or where d'ye dine?  
I find, by all you have been telling,  
That 'tis a house, but not a dwelling.<sup>1</sup>

The chapel is unworthy of the mansion, and contains nothing but the huge monument to the first duke and duchess. The magnificent collection of paintings was mostly sold in 1886; a few remain, most of which are at present hung in the green drawing-room and the library. Those most worthy of mention among the family portraits are: A group of the first duke and family by *Closterman*; several by *Kneller* including the duke and more than one of the duchess (in one portrait the duchess is playing cards with Lady Fitzharding); a group of the third Duke and family by *Sir Joshua Reynolds*, and a pleasing portrait of the present duchess. Of other portraits the most remarkable are two by *Vandyke*: one of Strafford and his secretary, the other of "La Belle Stuart" and her dwarf, Mrs. Gibson; and two by *Kneller* of William III. and Anne.

The *gardens* are entered by a gate E. of the

<sup>1</sup> *Atria longa patent; sed nec cœnantibus usquam,  
Nec somno locus est; quam bene non habitas!*

## WOODSTOCK

palace. On the E. side are the sunken Italian gardens. To the S. there stretches away an enormous open sward of green turf, with Bladon Church showing in the distance, and splendid trees on either side. On the right the paths wander away among the trees, and presently reach the sloping banks above the lake, which are absolutely charming. The slope is clothed with green turf, and sprinkled with fine trees of different kinds, enormous cedars, huge gnarled oaks, and large beeches, never so thickly set as to be crowded and yet quite natural in appearance. There are two stone summer-houses, a Temple of Artemis and a Temple of Health. At one point there is a most beautiful rosery with a fountain in the midst. At the foot of the lake there is a cascade which has quite a natural effect, and close by is another fountain.

Some distance on the far side W. of the lake is *High Lodge*, the residence of the Rangers of Woodstock. It is a building originally Tudor, and consists of a battlemented central tower of three storeys, flanked by wings of two storeys. Here in 1680 died prematurely the witty and profligate John Wilmot, Earl of Rochester, who had been made ranger by Charles II. (see also *Adderbury* and *Spelsbury*). During his last illness he was brought by the ministrations of Dr. Burnet to repentance, and a belief in Christianity which seems to have been thoroughly sincere.

The town of *Woodstock* needs little description. It sprang up in the reign of Henry II., and was given a market by John. It sent members to Edward I.'s Parliaments, and was presently granted a charter by Henry VI., being one of the smallest boroughs in England. It sent two members to

## OXFORDSHIRE

Parliament up till 1832, and only lost its last member in 1885. The church was, however, up till quite recently only a chapel of ease to Bladon. The tower was built in 1785, and the N. aisle, with clerestory and E. window of chancel, has been lately rebuilt. The S. aisle is original. It retains a good Norman door, but otherwise is late E.E. (1250-1260). The arcade has capitals where stiff-stalk foliage is mixed with grotesque heads, the earliest example of a feature common in North Oxfordshire. Four windows show plate-tracery, the first advance from the grouped lancets towards a geometrical pattern. The W. window and the very beautiful font are Dec.; the W. porch, two windows and the rood-screen Perp. There are two brasses dated 1431 and 1631.

*Wootton* (10 miles N.W. of Oxford, 2 miles N. of Woodstock) is beautifully situated at the junction of the Glyme and the Dorne, on the neck of the high ground between the deep-cut converging valleys. The church is E.E. and Dec. The E.E. parts are the N. arcade, the S. door, and the porch, which has three columns on each side and is the best thing in the church. The chancel and all the windows are Dec. The only interesting windows are at the E. end. One is reticulated and has above it an angel bearing a shield with William of Wykeham's arms. This may have come from New College, to which the living belongs. The other window has a curious Trans. to Perp. pattern. The clerestory and tower are Perp.

*Worsham Bottom.* (See Asthall.)

*Worton* (18 miles N. of Oxford) is the name of two villages in the Tew Valley. *Upper Worton* is on the hill to the S., and commands fine views over

## WOOTTON—WROXTON ABBEY

the valley, where *Hawk Hill*, an effective tree-crowned clump, rises on the far side. The church has been utterly spoilt by rebuilding. The old Norman font was banished for a new one, and may be seen at Hempton.

*Nether Worton* is in the valley below. Here is a Jacobean manor-house with battlemented gables and above it a large piece of water called "The Moat". The tiny church is late Dec., but retains a good E.E. door (S.) with dog-tooth mouldings, above which has been erected a small square tower dated 1630. The original chancel has been shortened, the E. window having been built in again, and a schoolroom has been joined on to the W. end of the nave.

WROXTON ABBEY (3 miles N.W. of Banbury, 25 miles from Oxford *via* Banbury) was originally a priory for Augustinian canons, founded in King John's reign. At the Reformation it became the property of Sir Thomas Pope, founder of Trinity College, Oxford. The estate was chosen by him as part of the endowment of the College; he also granted a lease of it to his heirs, an arrangement which has continued to the present day. After remaining in the Pope family for more than a century, it passed to the Norths by the marriage of Lady Frances Pope to Francis, second son of the fourth Baron North, and who afterwards became Lord Keeper and was created Baron Guildford. Two generations later these titles became merged, three Lord Norths in succession being also Earls of Guildford, the most celebrated of whom was the prime minister of George III. during the American War. The seat is still held by a Lord North, but the title of Earl of Guildford has gone to another

## OXFORDSHIRE

branch of the family. The present mansion was completed in 1618 by Sir William Pope, first Earl of Downe, and nephew of the founder of Trinity College; and one of the earliest guests was James I., though the date of his visit seems uncertain (indeed it may be as early as 1605). Little of the building seems to belong to an earlier date. The Priory buildings have almost utterly vanished. There remain only two or three rude E.E. arches in the basement, which show that the mansion is built on the site of the Priory. Also the Dec. window at the E. end of the chapel may be original.

The abbey is of great beauty and interest. *At present it is not shown to visitors, and can only be seen by special permission.* It lies very secluded, being sunk in a cup-shaped hollow, which is surrounded in all directions but one by well-wooded banks. The trees are very fine, beeches predominating, and one of the cedars is magnificent. At the back there is no extended view, but the ground falls away to a hollow where a small stream is dammed up into a beautiful lake, entirely encircled by trees. The front of the abbey is ivy-clad, and the symmetrical arrangement of the gables very effective, but perhaps the more irregular back where the dark stone is not hidden, is the more picturesque. The interior has many fine rooms and interesting portraits. Entering by the characteristic Italian porch we are at once in the *Great Hall*, a noble room with old oak, musicians' gallery, and plaster ceiling with central wooden pendant. Surrounding it are portraits of the Pope family, including Sir Thomas, founder of Trinity, and Sir William, who built the house. There is also a letter dated 3th November, 1642, especially exempting the Pöpes



WROXTON ABBEY



## WROXTON ABBEY

from the duty of provisioning the king's army. It was discovered in 1841. The dining-room has fine oak panelling, and a plaster ceiling with a strange pattern of musical instruments. It contains portraits of the North family, among them that of the Lord Keeper Guildford (above mantelpiece). There is also a bust of Lord North the prime minister. Next comes the garden parlour, a small room full of interesting historical portraits, among which are Henry Prince of Wales killing a stag, the Queen of Bohemia (Zuccherò), Queen Elizabeth at the age of nine, a portrait of Charles I. over which a group of flowers had been painted to conceal it, and three Holbeins. In a small room next entered is a well-known portrait of Lord North the prime minister. The library at the back of the house was thrown out about a century ago. It contains family portraits. The grand staircase has a plaster roof. On it is a picture of Kirtling Towers, the other seat of the Norths, from which their title is derived. Of the rooms upstairs, the Prince of Wales's bedroom is named from a visit of George IV. when prince. King James I.'s bedroom contains the bed slept in by that monarch when visiting the house. Both these rooms have good tapestry. The tapestry room contains a handsome carved mantelpiece with the date 1662, and a quilt said to have been worked by Mary Queen of Scots. The drawing-room has several important historical portraits, including that of Erasmus by Holbein. In the yellow drawing-room are the more recent family portraits. The *chapel* is entered by oak doors with the date 1619. It contains two studies of the heads of Christ and St. Peter for Leonardo da Vinci's Last Supper. The Dec. window, as stated



## OXFORDSHIRE

above, may be original. The stained glass dates from 1623.

The attached village is fairly picturesque. The church is almost entirely Dec., the only additions being the clerestory and the windows of the N. aisle, which are early Perp. Nearly all the other windows have plain intersecting tracery without foliation. The tower has been rebuilt, but the style was retained. The church contains a good deal of dark oak, Jacobean in style. Note also : (1) the Dec. font with figures in relief ; (2) *two* sedilia ; (3) stoup outside S. door ; (4) side altar with piscina and oak reredos ; (5) old Dec. screen with later additions. There is a magnificent alabaster tomb to Sir William Pope, d. 1631, and several monuments to the Norths, including one by Flaxman to Lord North the prime minister.

Just outside of Wroxton (N.W.) is an old stone sign-post with the date 1686.

*Wychwood.* (See Cornbury.)

YARNTON ( $4\frac{1}{2}$  miles N. of Oxford ; station on G.W.R.) is of interest geologically, since many tusks of elephants, etc., have been discovered there, and historically, as the direction in which Charles I. made his night retreat from Oxford on 4th June, 1644, eluding Essex and Waller. The church, tower, and splendid manor-house form an effective group of old buildings. The church is noteworthy in history because of a strange dispute for its possession between Rewley and Eynsham Abbeys. The manor-house is chiefly connected with the Spencer family, who held the manor during 1579-1712. It was built by Sir Thomas Spencer in 1612. Lately it had fallen into disrepair, but now it has been excellently restored. Above the

## WYCHWOOD—YARNTON

interesting front door are the Spencer arms, at the corners of which are small round loop-holes, leading into a low room above the porch, and intended for the defence of the house by muskets. The finest room inside is the hall, with a beautiful gallery and good oak panelling. Of the original early Norman church there remain three windows, one in the chancel, and two in the S. aisle. The latter have been subsequently altered to lancets, but the original round splays remain. The old font (in Spencer chapel) also belongs to the Norman church, and possibly the S. door, though Mr. Keyser thinks it E.E. In E.E. times the church was almost entirely rebuilt. The chancel is still E.E., with a fine chancel arch, lancet triplet at E. end, and side lancet (N.) (curiously like the Norman window beside it). In the nave the S. arcade is also E.E., but the N. windows are later, one being Trans. to Perp.; the other Perp. After the close of the Gothic period the church was twice altered by two remarkable benefactors. The first was Sir Thomas Spencer (see above), who between 1611 and 1616 built the tall tower, the Spencer chapel, which contains the family monuments, and the S. porch. The W. window and the clerestory are also apparently due to him. All his work shows excellent masonry, and is very good style for the date. Early in the nineteenth century, Alderman Fletcher, whose tomb is in the nave, enriched the church with a Perp. font brought from St. Michael's, Oxford, and an alabaster reredos (Perp.), discovered in a house near St. Edmund's Hall (Oxford), and filled the windows with painted glass collected from various sources. The only old glass really belonging to the church is in one of the nave windows,

## OXFORDSHIRE

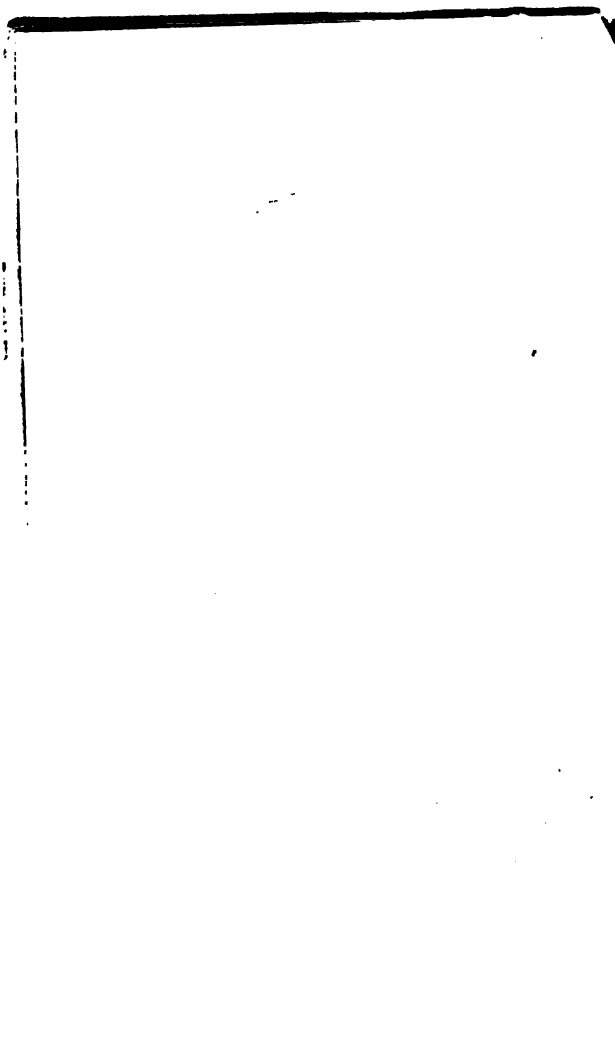
and contains two striking figures of monks. The woodwork of the church is very good throughout, comprising an old pulpit and reading-desk, several pews with poppy-heads, and two excellent screens. In the churchyard are the remains of a beautiful cross.

*Yelford* (12 miles W. of Oxford) is a quaint out-of-the-way parish with no road leading to it, and consisting of only three or four houses and a tiny Perp. church, with a good rood-screen, plain font and piscina, and new bell-cot. The interesting manor-house, now a farm, shows striking timber-built windows, one being a hexagonal oriel. Inside is an oak-panelled parlour with beautiful mantelpiece, showing carved figures, and coat-of-arms and initials of the Hastings, who formerly owned the manor.

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### III. BRASSES IN OXFORDSHIRE.

*(N.B.—This list, though fairly complete, does not profess to be absolutely so, brasses, names and dates being only given so far as they are mentioned in the text.)*

Adderbury (3), 1460, 1508 (Jane Smith), 1586 (Thomas More)  
Alvescot (1), 1579  
Aston Rowant (3), 1437, 1441, 1470. Also matrix of Sir Hugh le Blounte  
Baldon, March (2), 1618, 1651  
Bampton (3), 1429, 1500, 1633  
Brightwell Baldwin (4), 1371 (John ye Smith), 1439, 1547, 1562  
Britwell Salome (1), 1495  
Broughton (2), 1414, 1666  
Bucknell (1), 1638  
Burford (2), 1431 (Ian Spycer), 1611  
Cassington (2), 1414, 1590  
Caversfield (2), 15th century  
Chalgrove (2), 1441, 1446  
Chastleton (3), 1592, 1613, 1676  
Checkendon (5), 1404 (John Rede), 1440 (Wm. Beauchamp), 1490 (Anne Bowitt), 1428 (Cecilia Rede), 1435 (Edmund Rede)  
Chinnor (11), 1330-1510  
Chipping Norton (8), 1450, 1451, 1465, 1484, 1503, 1507, 1530, 1531  
Cottisford (1)  
Crowell (1), 1469  
Cuxham (1), 1506  
Deddington (2), fragmentary, one 1530 (William Byllyng)  
Dorchester (3), 1431 (Sir J. Drayton), (Abbot Richard Beauforest), and another

Ewelme (17), 1454-1695 (Simon Brailes is one)  
Eynsham (1), 1632 (Edward Stanley)  
Fulbrook (1), 1623  
Garsington (1), 1584  
Glympton (1), 1610 (Thomas Teesdale)  
Goring (5), 1375 (Henry de Aldryngton), 1401 (Sister Elizabeth), 1600, 1615, 1617  
Hampton Poyle (1), 1434 (John Poyle)  
Handborough (4), 1567 (Alexander Belsyre), and others  
Harpsden (5), one mutilated  
Haseley (6), 1497 (William Lenthall), and others  
Heythrop (1), 1522 (J. Ashefield)  
Holton (2), 1461 (William Brome), 1599 (William Brome)  
Ipsden, 1525 (Thomas and Isabel Englysch)  
Islip (3)  
Kiddington (1), 1513  
Kingham (1), 1588  
Leigh, South (1), 1557  
Lewknor (2), 1370 (John Aldebourne), 1611  
Mapledurham (1) (Sir R. Bardsolph)  
Milton, Great (1), 1546 (William Eggerley)  
Newnham Murren (1), 1593  
Noke (1), 1598 (John Bradshaw)  
Nuffield (1), 1360

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| <p>Oddington (1), 1518 (Randolph Hamstersley)<br/>         Rollright, Great (1), 1525<br/>         Rotherfield Greys (1), 1587 (Robert de Grey)<br/>         Shiplate (1), 1520 (John Symonds)<br/>         Shipton-under-Wychwood (1), 1548<br/>         Shirburn (2)<br/>         Somerton (1), 1552 (William Fermor)<br/>         Souldern (3), 1514 (T. Warner), 1537 (John Throckmorton), and another<br/>         Stadhampton (1), 1508<br/>         Stanton Harcourt (2)<br/>         Stoke Lyne (1), 1535 (Edward Love)</p> | <p>Stoke Talmage (2), 1504, 1589<br/>         Swalcliffe (some late to the Wykeham family)<br/>         Swinbrook (2), 1470 (John Croston), 1516<br/>         Tew, Great (3), 1410 (Sir John Willcotes), 1513, and another<br/>         Thame (6), 1463, 1503, 1508, 1597, 1667, and another<br/>         Waterperry (2), 1530 (Walter Curzon), and another<br/>         Watlington (3), 1485, and others<br/>         Whitchurch (4), 1420, 1455, 1543, 1610<br/>         Witney (1), 1500 (Rd. Waynman)<br/>         Woodstock (2), 1431, 1631</p> |
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